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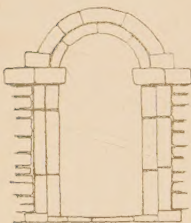
MANCHESTER & LIVERPOOL



CATHEDRALS, ABBEYS.
& FAMOUS CHURCHES.

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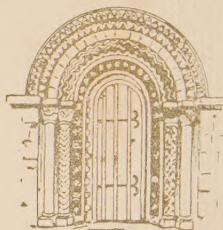
ROMANESQUE



PRE-NORMAN

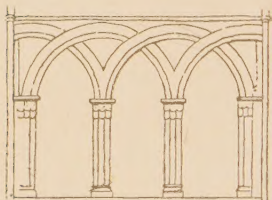


NORMAN



LATE NORMAN

GOTHIC



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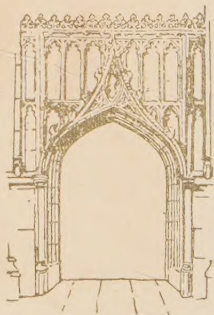
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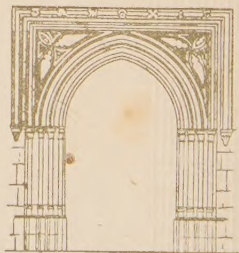
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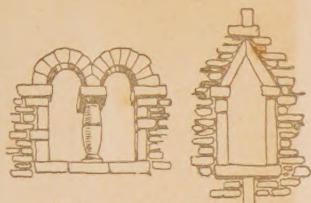
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ARCHITECTURE IN ENGLAND



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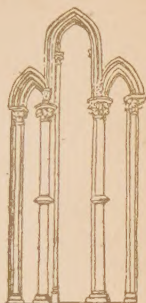
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NORMAN



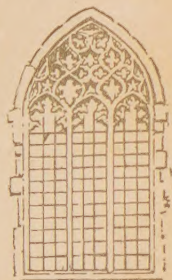
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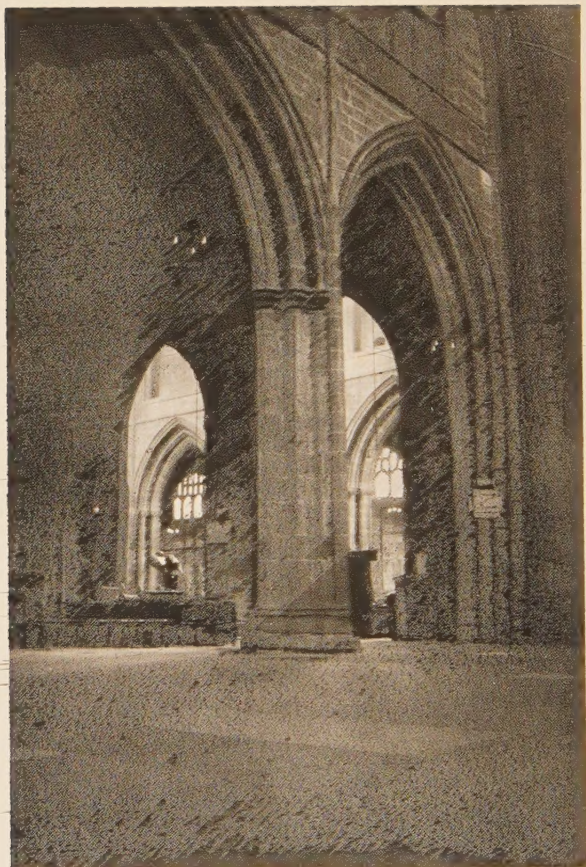
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CHESTER CATHEDRAL.

In the south transept showing the nave between the arches.

CATHEDRALS, ABBEYS
& FAMOUS CHURCHES

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CHESTER
MANCHESTER
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EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE series of volumes devoted to cathedrals, abbeys and famous churches to which this belongs has been produced on a plan which is somewhat novel. The writers have been encouraged to emphasise as far as possible the personal aspect of the buildings described in order that those who visit them with the books as their guides may understand the human element behind the great architectural achievements. Not only has space been given to builders and benefactors, but biographical references are made to those who are buried within the churches. In this way the human equation is sufficiently prominent for those who are not well acquainted with architectural matters to become interested in the structures, quite apart from whether the style is appealing to their several tastes or whether they had previously felt any curiosity as to how or when changes took place in the vast buildings which resulted from their aims.

Architectural description has been restricted to salient features, and where details are discussed it is because of their special interest. Mouldings and ornament generally are not described in detail, and ordinary features such as piscinæ, aumbries, stoups

and so on, which tend to make a book a mere inventory of church furniture, are as a rule ignored unless they are of particular interest.

This volume differs somewhat from the others of the series in that it deals with three cathedrals of importance, whereas the majority of the books are mainly concerned with one great cathedral and a group of abbeys and churches in the neighbourhood.

I am indebted to the kindness of the Dean of Manchester for permission to make use of some of the illustrations which appear in the fine volume entitled *Mediæval Woodwork of Manchester Cathedral*, by Henry A Hudson, M.A., F.S.A., and also to the Secretary of the Liverpool Cathedral Development Committee for similar permission to use illustrations which are to be found in the official handbook to the cathedral.

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CHAPTER I

CHESTER CATHEDRAL: THE HISTORY OF
THE SITE AND THE BUILDING OF THE
CATHEDRAL

CHESTER, MANCHESTER AND LIVERPOOL

CHAPTER I

CHESTER CATHEDRAL: THE HISTORY OF THE SITE AND THE BUILDING OF THE CATHEDRAL

ne of the earliest cathedrals in England is that which stands within the area of the Roman legionary camp on the Dee at Chester, for although it has been much altered in succeeding times, its main structure dates back to the xith century. Tradition claims that Chester was the site of a Christian church of the Romano-British period, when Legio XX., "Valeria Victrix," held sway from the fortress built above the tidal estuary. According to legend the Roman basilica was dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul, but whatever may be the truth concerning this it is known that a Saxon nunnery existed here, making it clear that a religious house stood on the spot by the xth century. In the question of age Chester Cathedral stands out in great contrast to its neighbouring cathedral, of Liverpool, now rising in proud splendour above the broad waters of the Mersey, for it has at least ten centuries of antiquity behind it.

But having said this one is bound to confess that Chester is not pre-eminent among the cathedrals of England, either for size or particular beauty. It is apt to disappoint the visitor at a first glance, especially if he has come from one of the more spectacular of the cathedrals, such as Lincoln or Canterbury. This perhaps explains why so few writers and travellers have written of the beauty of the cathedral which has been overshadowed by the antiquity of the city itself. Yet undoubtedly it is the central feature of the city, which would be impoverished indeed without the cathedral tower which rises over the low-lying alluvial flats of the estuary and dominates the whole mass.

The best view-point is from the city walls where one looks down over the southern side, with the spacious south transept, across a burial-ground beautified by flowering shrubs. Unfortunately the sense of antiquity is lost by the newness of the stone, which had become so weather-worn that it had to be completely restored. Those of us who regret the necessity of restoration are reminded by writers who saw it before the great work was taken in hand that "the surface rot of the very perishable red sandstone, of which the cathedral was built, was positively unsightly," and that the "whole place previous to restoration struck one as woebegone and neglected; it perpetually seemed to hover on the verge of collapse, and yet was without a trace of the romance of the average ruin." So wrote Mr. Charles Hiatt at the end of last century, confirming the report of the writers of the *Beauties of England and Wales*, who had described Chester at the opening of the same century as "ragged through

The Abbey's Domestic Buildings 15

the decay of the mouldering stone with which it is built." It is therefore possible to exonerate the restorers of the cathedral, while at the same time regretting that the use of so perishable a stone made such drastic work necessary.

If the original intention of the great builders of the abbey church had been carried out, the cathedral would have possessed two towers flanking the western entrance, which would have enormously enriched the whole building, giving it a dominance which it now lacks. But probably owing to the turbulent condition of Chester, and the incessant quarrels between the abbey and the city, the resources of the abbey did not permit the erection of these towers, of which only the bases exist. But if Chester must be confessed poor in some things it is passing rich in conventual buildings, for it retains features long lost in many of its sister churches. The cloister is surrounded with the usual domestic features of a monastery, the refectory, chapter-house, priests' room with staircase to the dormitory, and the cellars with the Norman columns which supported the abbot's great hall, together giving that sense of the monastic life which makes it possible to reconstruct the daily routine of members of the Benedictine Order.

Before discussing the cathedral it is well to know something of its historic past, of the story which its walls could unfold. Fortunately there are written records which, though not entirely reliable in every detail, enable us to formulate a very fair idea of the appearance of the abbey church and what was happening within its precincts during the centuries

preceding the Dissolution. The fortunes of the church indeed reflect the history of England, for Chester felt all the successive incursions of barbarian foes, became an important outpost under Norman rule, and throughout the Middle Ages played its part in those struggles between barons and kings which have gradually brought about the evolution of modern England.

Whatever amount of Christianity existed in this remote military station during the late Roman period, it may be taken for granted that in the disruption caused by the withdrawal of the Eagles the weakling Church made rapid progress. The west quickly became covered with huge monasteries, and one of the greatest of these was only a few miles from Chester, at Bangor Iscoed. Therefore, when the hand of the invading Englishman fell upon Chester in the year 613 it meant the extinction of institutions which had reached a stage of considerable development. The armies from the Welsh kingdoms of Gwynedd, Powys and Theyrnllwg (equivalent to North Wales, Cheshire and Lancashire), which assembled to defend Deva against the mighty Æthelfrith of Northumbria, were accompanied to the field by some thirteen hundred of the occupants of this overgrown monastery.

The English king looked with wonder on this assemblage of spiritual warriors as it stood apart from the British army, putting up its prayers for victory. He decided that the "sorcerers" were likely to prove more dangerous than the fighting men—"they bear not arms," he said to his chiefs, "but they fight against us none the less by their imprecations

and incantations, therefore slay them first." "So," continues the Father of English History, "he first attacked them and afterwards destroyed the rest of that unlucky army at the cost of great slaughter in his own ranks. About one thousand two hundred of the monks who came to pray are said to have been massacred and only fifty to have escaped by flight." The event was mourned by the Celtic chroniclers as the slaughter of the saints.

The coming of the Angles drove the Christian Britons into Wales, but by the viiith century the English had thrown off their heathendom, and Wulfhere, the first Christian King of Mercia, had married one of the four saintly daughters of the King of the East Angles. Their daughter, St. Werburgh, was professed a nun by her aunt, St. Etheldreda, the famous Abbess of Ely, in whose convent she remained until she was requested to take charge of some religious houses recently established in Mercia by her uncle, Æthelred, King of Mercia. She died in 690 at Trentham, and was buried at Hanbury, the chroniclers recording that her body remained for nearly two centuries perfect and uncorrupt. But by this time the Danes were coming across the stormy North Sea in their ominous dragon ships, and striking the same terror into the hearts of the English as they themselves had done to the British a few centuries before. The monkish chronicler of the Abbey of St. Werburgh who wrote in the xiiith century, records briefly under the year 789: "First arrival in England of the Danes who taught the English to drink too much." They not only brought the vice of intemperance with them,

but plunged the country again into the misery of savage slaughter, of rapine and slavery, of much destruction of order and government, of the burning of churches, and the carrying off of portable treasures. It was under the fear of the butchery of the Danes that the men of Hanbury fled to Chester in 875, taking with them in a litter the body of St. Werburgh, which the chronicler avers "was then for the first time dissolved into dust." Her body was laid in the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, which was afterwards re-dedicated in her honour as the Church of St. Werburgh and St. Oswald, the saintly King of Northumbria. It is thought that Æthelflaed, the daughter of Alfred, the martial "Lady of Mercia," changed the church into a college of secular canons, and that she probably restored it when she rebuilt the city as a great barrier fortress against the viking city kings of Ireland. We know that by the time of King Athelstan, the grandson of Alfred, the fame of St. Werburgh had spread, and that the king himself paid a pilgrimage to her shrine. It is also known that King Edgar, under whose wise rule England was growing in peace and prosperity, granted a charter to the canons of St. Werburgh in 968, possibly at the time when he was rowed on the Dee by the eight vassal kings. This may be a legendary story, but it symbolises the supremacy which the King of the West Saxons had established under the wise guidance of Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, the first of the ecclesiastical statesmen who were to do so much in the building up of the power of England.

Dunstan was anxious to encourage monasticism,

which was then passing through a stage of purification, and Edgar is said to have founded as many as forty monasteries.

About a century later, in 1057, Leofric, the great Earl of Mercia, and his wife, the Lady Godiva, famous for the story associated with Peeping Tom of Coventry, restored the abbey, which was very possibly to a great extent built of Roman materials. As far as is known there is not a fragment of any kind remaining to-day of the church which was benefited by Leofric and Godiva, the grandparents of the two ineffective earls, Edwin and Morcar, whose failure at a national crisis was one of the causes of the Norman Conquest.

In calling Leofric and Godiva the parents of Hereward the Wake, the "Last of the English," Charles Kingsley was almost certainly treading within the borderland of romance.

It is with Leofric, the great earl, whose "counsel was as if one had opened the divine oracles," and with the Lady Godiva, whose beauty and saintliness of character are renowned, that the Anglo-Saxon story of the abbey church ends, for they stood at the threshold of a new era for England and for Chester. A few centuries earlier the Lady Godiva would doubtless have been added to the calendar of saints, and have had her shrine in the abbey church along with St. Werburgh, for she founded the great monastery at Coventry, besides enriching many others, and maintaining poor folk wherever she went, but she appropriately closes the period of English rule, and with her too the name of any woman of pre-eminence in the story of Chester Cathedral,

The death of King Harold at Senlac, though distant enough from Chester, meant a great change for the Abbey of St. Werburgh. William the Norman was elected king in legal form, but he had nearly five years of intermittent struggle before the country was ultimately won, and it was at Chester that the final conquest was achieved, the episode of the camp of refuge at Ely scarcely being a part of the national resistance. It was in the winter of 1070 that the Conqueror marched from York, where he had just put down the rebellion in the north which had been fomented by the Danish king, Sweyn Estrithson, across a snow-bound country to Chester, a march which showed his indomitable will as well as his capacity as a soldier. The clemency with which he had signalised his earlier years was put aside, and the country was horribly devastated in a manner which left it desolate for nearly a century.

The English earls, Edwin and Morcar, of the house of Leofric, who had been allowed to retain their earldoms at first, lost all by their adherence to Hereward, and a Norman earl, the nephew of the Conqueror, was made Earl of Chester. Hugh d'Avranches, surnamed Lupus, or the Wolf, was made guardian of the Welsh border, with orders to keep back the Welsh, an added inducement to energy being that all land he won from the Welsh would be added to his earldom. This fief was held by the sword, as the king held the country by the crown.¹ Chester was a county palatine, which

¹ A sword reputed to have belonged to Hugh Lupus may be seen in the British Museum, a two-edged weapon, 3 ft. 11 ins. long, bearing an inscription in Latin, "HUGO COMES CESTRIAE" (Hugh, Count of Chester).



CHESTER IN THE XVIIITH CENTURY, FROM THE RIVER DEE
Showing the Cathedral on the left and St. John's Church on the right.

gave its earl very high powers, enabling him to assemble his parliament of lesser barons, to have courts of law, and to exercise almost regal authority. This power was held by the family of Hugh Lupus till the last male heir in 1237, when Henry III. made his own son (Edward I.) Earl of Chester, a title which has remained in the royal family to this day.

Hugh Lupus, like his overlord, King William, was a Norman, accustomed to the more strict rule among the religious bodies prevailing on the Continent, and he seems to have disliked the secular canons who were in possession of the abbey church of St. Werburgh. When the great survey of Domesday was made in 1086, the canons were still in the abbey, but their tenure was nearing its end. A few years afterwards the earl became ill and begged Anselm, abbot of the famous monastery of Bec in Normandy, to come over to see him, and it was then that a plan for a strict Benedictine monastery was made. The secular canons were turned out, and their abbey apparently razed to the ground, to allow a stone building in the Norman style to be erected.

In 1093 the new church was commenced, and a body of monks introduced from Normandy, whose duties were to pray for the souls of William their king, and all the royal family, "for the founders, and their fathers and mothers, antecessors and heirs, and the souls of all Christians, as well living as deceased." St. Anselm appointed his own chaplain, Richard, as the first abbot of the new order, and was about to leave England when he was forced to come to the sick-bed of William Rufus, who obliged him,

much against his will, to receive the crozier of the See of Canterbury, which the Red King had left vacant until the fear of death reminded him of his duty.

The Romanesque church, as planned by Hugh Lupus and Anselm, must have been very similar to Canterbury in its Norman days. It was cruciform, having two short transepts and a choir, with aisles, all ending in apses, while the west end of the nave was flanked by two towers. Of this church the north transept remains, the north walls of the nave, and the base of the north-west tower, and on the west side of the cloisters there is a large Norman crypt with sturdy pillars which formed the undercroft of the abbot's hall.

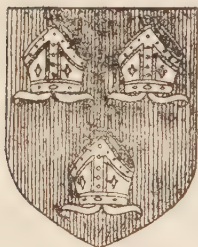
Under Abbot Richard the most easterly part of the church was finished, the nave and north-west tower being completed by his successor, Abbot William. There had been no head of the monastery for some years after the death of Richard in 1117, for the young Earl of Chester, who had succeeded Hugh Lupus, refused to nominate a new abbot, although he had previously shown his favour to the abbey by granting the monks a tithe of all the salmon taken at the bridge, besides granting lands. The malediction of Heaven pursued the rash young earl, who was drowned with Prince William in the sinking of the "White Ship," which was accompanying King Henry I. back from Normandy in 1120.

By the end of the XIIth century the Norman church seems to have been in ruins. Geoffrey, the seventh abbot, who held office from 1194 to 1208, complained

that "the inroads of the Welsh had deprived the monks of much valuable property, and the greater part of the church was in ruins." We know from the chronicle of the abbey that in 1180 there was a great fire in the city, the entry stating, "Chester was almost entirely burnt down, that is to say, the greater part of the city, on Mid-Lent Sunday at 2 o'clock p.m." Not only had fire caused destruction, but three inundations by the sea had taken place at Ince and on the Wirral, so that Chester had suffered severely, and the abbot describes his church as "intolerably threatened with ruin, and threatening with danger of death those who assisted at the divine offices." Enough money came in as the result of pastoral letters of appeal from the bishops for the choir to be rebuilt, and the repairs went on under the succeeding abbot, Hugh Grylle, whose tenure seems to have been a prosperous one. Large sums of money were subscribed, the number of monks was increased, and the work of restoration continued with vigour. By 1211 we learn that "the choir of the cathedral of Chester, as also the stately tower-steeple [upon which a lofty steeple was intended to have been built], was completely finished." It was during this period that the chapter-house and the refectory were erected, both excellent examples of beautiful Early English work, the refectory still retaining the stone pulpit from which the reader edified the community during meal-times.

The ruler of the Palatine of Cheshire at this time was Earl Randle, the last of the direct descendants of Hugh Lupus, famous as the leader of the feudal aristocracy against Hubert de Burgh, the famous justiciar through

whom peace had been restored in England during the minority of Henry III. Professor Tout writes of Earl Randle as "not a great statesman, and hardly even a successful warrior, yet his popular personal qualities, his energy, his long duration of power, and his enormous possessions, give him a place in history. His memory, living on long in the minds of the people, inspired a series of ballads, which vied in popularity with the cycle of Robin Hood. . . . With him died the last of the great Norman houses, tenacious beyond



THE ARMS OF THE
SEE OF CHESTER

its fellows, and surpassing in its two centuries of unbroken descent the usual duration of the mediæval baronial family." When he died in 1232 his nephew, John the Scot, Earl of Huntingdon, became Earl of Chester, but on his death five years later, without heirs, the great palatinate reverted to the crown.

The Norman Earls of Chester had been great benefactors to the abbey, granting it many privileges, among them the right to hold fairs. At these cheapings the abbot was allowed to erect booths outside the abbey gates on St. John's Day, for the sale of goods. This caused much contention with the citizens, who would not accept the abbot's claim that no goods could be sold in the city except at the particular booths set up by the convent. In the end it was agreed that the citizens might place their own stalls at a certain distance from the abbey precincts, and the abbot promised not to let the convent booths to

any strangers while the stalls of the citizens remained unlet.

One of the most turbulent periods of the abbey was during the abbacy of Thomas Capenhurst, when there were incessant quarrels with the barons who were endeavouring to seize Church property. The monkish chronicler does not fail to point out the dire retribution which befell all those who assailed the abbey rights. A certain Roger de Montalt, then justiciar of Chester, extorted by force from the lord abbot the manor of Bretton, and in consequence his eldest son perished within fifteen days, and he himself "died in poverty within two years, the common people being ignorant of the place of his burial." Shortly afterwards Roger de Venables obtained the advowson of the church of Astbury "by a wrongful verdict in the county court of Chester," which the abbot was able to recover, "but the said Roger died miserably within the same year." But the worst case of all was that of William la Zouche, the justiciar, who took violent possession of the abbey itself and, supported by a band of armed men, heaped so many indignities upon the church, that the whole of the clergy of Chester, regular and secular, placed themselves voluntarily under an interdict for four days.

Abbot Thomas Capenhurst died early in the year 1265, which was to see such stirring events in England. His successor, Simon of Whitchurch (Simon de Albo Monasterio, as he is called in the records), was duly elected by the whole chapter, but his admission as abbot was prevented for a few weeks by the justiciar, Lucas de Taney. Appeal was made to the great Earl

of Leicester, Simon de Montfort, who by his defeat of the royal forces at the Battle of Lewes, in the previous year, had become ruler of England. He ordered that the abbot should be accepted and all the goods and revenues wrongfully withheld to be restored. When de Montfort fell at Evesham in August, Abbot Simon found Prince Edward, then Earl of Chester, enraged at his connection with the fallen earl, but the abbot was tactful and won over the prince, who, "moved by divine inspiration, graciously admitted the said abbot" and ordered all revenues to be restored—even down to the two casks of wine which the royal party had consumed.

Abbot Simon continued in the good graces of the prince, and later, when Edward had become king, Simon assisted him loyally in the Welsh war, supplying him with men and transport. In return the king assisted the abbey by giving it a special charter and by granting it a tithe of all the venison killed in the Delamere forest, the abbot himself being specially allowed the privilege of hunting in the forest. Protected by royal favour, Simon was able to turn his attention to the abbey church, the east end of which he rebuilt. The Lady Chapel was added beyond this behind the high altar. The two chapels which had preceded this re-arrangement had stood at the ends of the choir aisles, both having eastern apses, while the high altar had a screen extending between the pillars, making a processional way from the aisles to the Lady Chapel. The style of the new work was of the latest development of Early English, at the transitional period when it was merging into Decorated.

High-water Mark of Abbey's Prosperity 29

This rebuilding must have been going on when Edward I. and Queen Eleanor were in Chester in 1283, after the final conquest of Wales. They attended a service in the abbey on St. Augustine's Day, May 26th, and heard mass, presenting a valuable cloth as a thankoffering, the king taking an oath to preserve the liberties of St. Werburgh.

This vigorous abbot, who had found time to satisfy his keen love of hunting amidst his pre-occupations with church building and administration, died in 1289, and was succeeded by Thomas de Byrchhyles, of whom nothing is known of great interest beyond the fact that he was successful in his claims for the revenues of the abbey from the king, who had held them for two years before appointing a new abbot. We also learn that, when his grave on the south side of the choir was opened in 1787, his body was found in an almost complete state of preservation.

The high-water mark of the abbey's prosperity seems to have been reached in 1345, when Abbot William de Bebyngton obtained the coveted possession of the mitre for himself and his successors. After this time the abbots seem to have been men who brought no particular credit to their convent, either for spiritual qualities or for worldly judgment. They were constantly embroiled with the townsfolk, and were at times accused of unlawful deeds against the city, which brought them into disrepute. Richard de Seynesbury, for instance, was so unsaintly in his conduct that an enquiry was ordered, and a visitation was made to investigate the matter. It consisted of the Abbot of St. Albans, the provincial president of

the Benedictines, assisted by the Prior of Coventry and the Sub-prior of St. Albans. Rather than face the ordeal of an explanation of his turbulent behaviour, the abbot resigned his post to his overlord, the Pope, who appointed Thomas de Newport in his place in 1363.

The lawlessness of the times, both in the city and within the abbey, has been attributed to the fearful scourge known as the "Black Death" which occurred in 1348 and swept off thousands of the people, including the Abbot of St. Werburgh himself, as well as great numbers of the clergy. Though preachers declared that the plague was a message from Heaven to proclaim God's judgment on the sins of mankind, the populace was led in many cases rather to reckless and sinful living than to religious observance and a more moral mode of life. The heavy losses among the clergy rendered the position more difficult, many parishes being left without pastors. It was long before the Church could recover its old position and good order prevail again, and by the end of the century Richard II., who had been an especially good friend to the county which furnished him with thousands of sturdy and devoted bowmen, had met his tragic fate at Pontefract.

Richard had been very popular in Cheshire, and his bodyguard of Cheshire archers were distinguished as the king's own men by his personal badge of the White Hart. He even assumed at one time the title of Prince of Chester, "for the love he bare to the gentlemen and commoners of Chester," but it chanced that one of his last tragic moments was passed there,

when he was forced to ride as a prisoner through the streets, jeered at by the populace, who had no pity for the unhappy monarch, awkwardly disguised in the friar's dress in which he had tried to escape. It is not quite certain what part the clergy took in this, but it seems that the abbot, Henry de Sutton, cannot have been very favourable to the king's party, for in 1393 we find that Sir Baldwin de Radyngton, one of King Richard's most staunch adherents, stormed the abbey and wasted the goods there, an action which probably rendered the monastery unlikely to assist the king in his time of misfortune. Richard's well-known leaning towards the Lollards was not likely to have increased his popularity.

The first half of the xvth century again shows us abbots who were lacking in the purity of aim of their earlier predecessors, who had raised the Norman building of St. Werburgh in sincere piety. John Salghall was excommunicated in 1450 for not answering to a summons to convocation, but was afterwards absolved. His successor, Richard Oldham, was accused of such a serious offence that he was imprisoned in Chester Castle, but in spite of many irregularities of conduct, he was made Bishop of the Isle of Man, and was buried in the Abbey of St. Werburgh. It appears surprising that this irregularity in the abbey was allowed to continue, but the discipline was evidently at a low ebb, and the very monks who had been most prominent in causing trouble in the monastery were promoted to high places—not a result likely to bring about good order. Thomas de Newport had been a leader in an attack on Abbot Richard de

Seynesbury, and yet the Pope appointed him to the office of abbot, a post he disgraced by bribing jurors, and by other illegal acts.

It is not until the very end of the century that one can find an abbot devoted to his work—Simon Ripley, who was appointed in 1485, the year when the Tudor king, Henry VII., ascended the throne. He was the last, save one, of the great builders of the abbey church, and to him we owe nave, south transept and central tower. His initials S. R. are to be found on one of the capitals of the nave pillars. There was peace during his tenure of office, which unfortunately only lasted for seven years. He died at Warwick in 1492, and his successor, John Birkenshaw, was again involved in dissensions.

But though the powerful abbots were engaged in secular disputes, the inner life of the abbey had not been entirely given up to undisciplined and undignified pursuits. It was during the XIVth century that Ralph (or Ranulph) Higden wrote his *Polychronicon* in seven books, describing the history of the world from the Creation to his own day, enriched with much geographical description of the different countries. It was written in the Abbey of St. Werburgh, and is valuable for the period known to the author himself. An English translation was printed by Caxton in 1482, showing the importance in which it was held. Higden had become a monk about 1299, and when he died in 1363 he was buried in the south aisle of the choir.

A previous chronicler connected with the abbey had been Lucian the monk, who wrote a century

before Higden, and whose manuscript is now in the Bodleian Library, to whom it was presented by a certain Dr. Thomas Allen in 1601. It is strange that he is never referred to by Higden, when the manuscript must have been in the abbey library, and was valuable as the earliest known account of Chester, for the monk wrote with intention about his own neighbourhood, desiring as he says "to dwell upon subjects nearest at hand," and not to relate fabulous stories of distant countries. If he had been content to write in the simple descriptive manner in which he sometimes indulges, his book would have been more interesting than it is, with its masses of illustrations and examples introduced to show the author's learning. But with all its shortcomings "it is almost a unique work in its own period," says Mr. Taylor, who has edited the chronicle, and who adds that it is "one of the two earliest guide-books known, however much it may be wrapped up in sermon."

The last of the literary monks of the abbey, writing just before the dissolution of the monastery, was Henry Bradshaw, who seems to refer to Lucian's chronicle, though he does not mention it by name. Some of the events, however, appear to be so similar in Bradshaw's poetical work, that it is thought that he must have seen Lucian's chronicle. Bradshaw, who died in 1513, compiled a life of St. Werburgh, the patroness of the abbey, which is so picturesquely written that it is quoted in every book on Chester and the cathedral. He tells us all the marvellous deeds of the saintly virgin, claiming for her a position of

prioress of the nunnery, which she never held. The following is typical of his style:

In the Abbay of Chestre she is shryned rychely,
Pryores and lady of that holy place;
The chyef protectryce of the said monastery,
Longe before the conquest by deuyne grace.
Protectryce of the cytee she is and ever was
Called specyall prymate and pryncypall presydent,
There rulyng under our lorde omnpotent.

While speaking of the literature which flourished in the abbey, one must not fail to mention the Chester Mystery Plays, which were probably written during the xivth century. These plays are famous with all who have made a study of the early origin of the dramatic art in England, as they were acted by the citizens for two or three centuries until put down by the opposition of the Reformed Church. The authorship of the plays is not known, though some assert that the chronicler Ralph Higden wrote them, while others insist that there is no evidence, and that he probably merely revised the work of others. They were acted for three days in the week following the Whitsuntide festival. The representations were provided by the city companies and trade guilds and must have been given in English. The performers had to be in their places very early in the morning "at the myd howre betwix iiij and v of the cloke," in order to be ready to start on their arranged route. The first performance was given at the abbey gate in front of the abbot, and the next before the mayor at the High Cross. These plays are said to have been the only Bible of the people in the Middle Ages. They had the

biblical stories acted before their eyes, with a good deal of fun introduced, though the moral lesson was always enforced by an expositor who explained the play in a prologue.

John Birkenshaw, the 24th Abbot of St. Werburgh, took office in 1493, and posterity is indebted to him for the building which he undertook. He evidently intended to finish the west front, and to complete the two towers, but was not able to do more than finish the beautiful Perpendicular window and doorway, and the lower part of the south-west tower. With him ends the building energy of the abbots, who were so soon to be dismissed from the place of their power and influence. As we look back over the line of abbots three names stand out pre-eminent as the builders of the existing cathedral—Simon of Whitchurch, who erected the choir and Lady Chapel; Simon Ripley, who rebuilt the nave and south transept, and Birkenshaw, who erected the west front.

But evil days were already coming fast upon the abbey, whose independence was encroached upon, according to the abbot, by the citizens. In 1511 there was such violent dissension that the abbot was actually suspended for many years, and was only restored in 1530, after which he held sway till his death in 1537. He was holding office when Prince Arthur, the eldest son of Henry VII., came to Chester in 1498, and witnessed one of the mystery plays, *The Assumption of Our Ladye*, at the abbey gate, and he also was at the head of the community when Chester was scourged by many visitations of that plague or "sweating sickness," the nature of which is not yet known,

which was so deadly on one occasion that all trading ceased and grass grew in the streets.

Four years after the death of Abbot Birkenshaw, the Abbey of St. Werburgh had ceased to exist, the monks were dispersed, and the church elevated to the rank of cathedral of the new diocese of Chester, which Henry VIII. cut away from Lichfield. Before this time Cheshire was under the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, but from now until the sixteenth century the Bishopric of Chester was to include all Cheshire, all Lancashire, Westmorland, with parts of Flintshire, Denbigh, Cumberland and Yorkshire. The arms of the see consist of three mitres, which are said to indicate the original three cathedral cities, Lichfield, Coventry and Chester. The last abbot, Thomas (or John, as he is sometimes termed) Clark, was obviously not narrow-minded, for he found it possible to acquiesce in the king's high-handed action, and to hand over the revenues of the abbey, which were then stated to be more than £1000 a year, probably something like £10,000 in the purchasing power of 1913. For his amenability the abbot was made the first dean, and continued to exercise authority over the church under the new conditions, when the dedication was changed from the Saxon saint to that of Christ and the Blessed Virgin.

The first bishop of the new diocese was John Bird, who had gained advancement by his sermons against the supremacy of the Pope, but who was of a compliant order and quite ready to agree with the return to former conditions when Queen Mary held her brief authority. But he was not able to keep his vow of

celibacy, and he was displaced in 1554 in favour of George Cotes, who was ardent in support of the old religion, and in his short year of authority is notorious for bringing about the death of the only Protestant who suffered for his faith in Chester.

George Marsh, who had been a curate in Leicestershire, a man of middle age, and a widower with young children, was condemned by the bishop's consistory court, held in the Lady Chapel of the cathedral, as a heretic, and after being imprisoned in the abbey gatehouse, was led through the streets, reading his Bible on the way, to Boughton, near Chester, where he was burned. This was the last act of intolerance on the part of the Roman Catholics, who were themselves to suffer under the harsh rules against recusants during the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and the early Stuarts.

During the early xviiith century there is no building work to record, in fact the cathedral must have been neglected, for in 1689 we find Bishop Nicholas Stratford making an effort to get some necessary repairs carried out, but apart from this, bishops and deans apparently were indifferent concerning the structural condition of their cathedral church. One of the most remarkable of the bishops was John Bridgeman, father of Sir Orlando Bridgeman, who was bishop for thirty-three years, proving himself an energetic but somewhat over-stern prelate. He found that the dean and chapter had become very lax, so much so that he laid down certain injunctions, ordering the minor canons and singing-men to be regular in their places—"Every one that shall come tardy after the Confession is said, or goe out before the end of Divine

Service, to be punished with a fine." He also required the higher clergy to live in residence, to wear the surplice and hood, and to observe the order of preaching.

When William Prynne, the Puritan, who had written against plays and all kinds of amusement, and had suffered the cruel penalty of losing his ears, came to Chester, he was cheered in the streets by the Puritans, to the great indignation of Bishop Bridgeman, who insisted on their punishment by fine and imprisonment. Prynne himself suffered from the intolerance of the Puritans in later years, and was imprisoned for opposing the Independent party in 1650. He indeed became so disgusted with the Commonwealth that he welcomed the Restoration and ended his life, which had begun so strenuously, in the quiet work of compiling history and keeping the Tower records.

Charles I. was at Chester late in 1645, during the Civil War, when he witnessed from the city walls an encounter between his cavalry under Sir Marmaduke Langdale and the Parliamentary forces. When his men were defeated he escaped into Wales, asking the city to hold out for ten days, which the loyal citizens interpreted into a siege of eighteen weeks, during which they had endured the greatest hardships from famine. The bishop, who was a strong Royalist, lost his see under the Commonwealth, and died near Oswestry in 1652.

Another famous bishop was John Wilkins, who had married Robina, the sister of Oliver Cromwell, and who managed to be in favour both under the Commonwealth and with the Court at the Restoration.

He is chiefly remembered for his scientific and philosophic interests, being one of the founders of the Royal Society. He wrote a book called *The Discovery of a New World*, in which he discussed the possibility of a flying machine to reach the moon, which he considered was probably inhabited, and he also seemed to foretell the telephone in his book *Mercury; or the Secret and Swift Messenger, shewing how a man may privately and with speed tell his thoughts to friends at any distance*.

But the most distinguished of all the bishops of the xviiith century was John Pearson, who wrote the *Exposition of the Creed*, and who was considered one of the greatest divines of his age. He died in 1686, but was buried so modestly, without any stone to mark the spot, that it was not until 1844 that his remains were discovered and removed to the north transept, where now an altar tomb with a recumbent effigy forms a fitting monument to one of the most learned of the ecclesiastical rulers of Chester.

It was Pearson's successor, Nicholas Stratford, who found the cathedral to be in such need of repair that he made great efforts to restore the building and apparently re-cased the choir. For a century after that nothing seems to have been done until in 1818 Thomas Harrison, an architect of some repute, was employed. He restored the exterior solidly, though with no great consideration for the work of the past. It was in 1868 that the great restoration took place, largely through the enthusiasm of Dean Howson, who supported the architect, Sir Gilbert Scott, in all his plans.

CHAPTER II

CHESTER CATHEDRAL: THE BUILDING

CHAPTER II

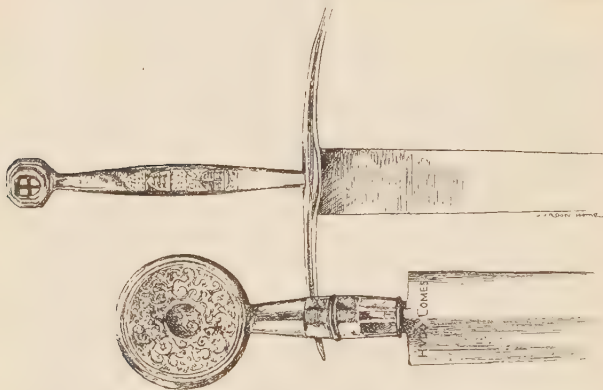
CHESTER CATHEDRAL: THE BUILDING

THE EXTERIOR

he chief feature of the exterior of the cathedral is undoubtedly the tower, which rises over the crossing of the transepts. It is Perpendicular in style, and seems to have been the work of Abbot Simon Ripley, and possibly also of his successor, Birkenshaw. Mr. J. H. Parker says that there is distinct record that a central tower was built in the XIIIth century, though it is not easily proved whether it was built from the foundations or if the Norman piers were again utilised. Sir Gilbert Scott, the architect of the restoration, was of the opinion that the lower part of the central tower belonged to the Norman church, but Dean Howson considered that his theory was disproved by the discovery, during restoration, that the great north-eastern pier was supported on some XIIIth-century tombstones. But whatever the base of the tower may be, the superstructure is undoubtedly quite Late Perpendicular, which is clearly shown by the windows. The parapets, pinnacles and turrets were added by Sir Gilbert Scott; old illustrations of the church show no sign of them.

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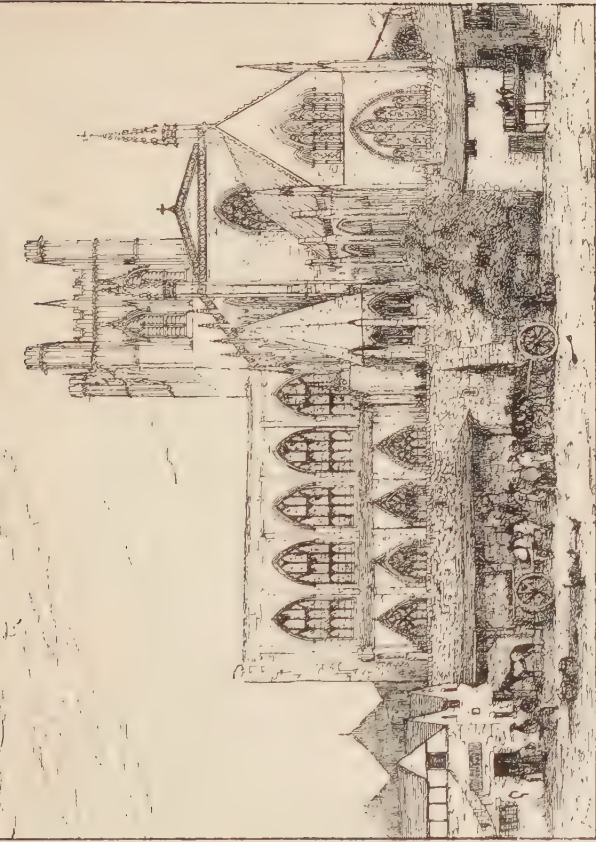
THE WEST FRONT of a cathedral is usually a very important feature, but that of Chester is comparatively insignificant. It has always been encroached upon by other buildings, at first by the abbot's quarters, which later on became the episcopal palace, destroyed in recent times for the erection of the King's School.



STATE SWORDS OF THE EARLS OF CHESTER, POSSIBLY OF THE
XVTH CENTURY

The blade of the lower weapon is inscribed "HUGO COMES CESTRIAE" and may have belonged to the Norman Earl—Hugh Lupus.

The space between the intended towers, which would have transformed the whole cathedral, had they ever been built, is filled with a beautiful Perpendicular window. The tracery was put in by Abbot Birkenshaw, who at the same time built the Perpendicular doorway, with the canopied niches on each side and much enrichment above. The same abbot also



CHESTER CATHEDRAL FROM THE "HOP-POLE" YARD, AS IT APPEARED IN 1871
The drawing shows the south transept as it was before the restoration, begun in 1868.
From an illustration by Mr. A. Rimmer in Dean Howson's "Chester as it was."



rebuilt the base of the south-west tower, which he evidently meant to complete, but of which only the base remains, with a good Perpendicular window, above which runs a richly panelled course.

The exterior of the cathedral has required such drastic restoration, owing to the mouldering of the stone, that it is quite frankly uninteresting. Nearly all the sculpture has been replaced—a mediæval feature having been revived in the new work by the introduction of portrait heads on the corbels. Mr. Gladstone is shown with a pen in his mouth, apparently engaged in uprooting a church; Lord Beaconsfield is represented with a sword, defending the crown.

All the north side of the cathedral is occupied by the conventual buildings, while the south side is, as Mr. Francis Bond writes, "to all intents and purposes, nineteenth-century work," and in consequence lacking in the fascination of the past. There are two features which impress the visitor on viewing the exterior, particularly from the walls of the city, from which the best prospect can be obtained. One is the great size of the south transept, and the other, the curious conical roof above the apsidal end of the south choir aisle. The choir aisles of the Norman church ended in apses, but during the later building period they were extended along both sides of the Lady Chapel. On removing the timber roof at the great restoration there was discovered strong evidence of a high-pitched roof over the apse, almost resembling a steeple. Sir Gilbert Scott traced these slopes upwards and found that "they represented a stone roof of no less than forty-two feet high above the tops of the walls." This

curious feature so much impressed the architect that it was decided to rebuild the end of the south aisle in this manner, thus allowing the south front of the Lady Chapel to be exposed. There is a certain interest in inspecting an accurate representation of the original Norman apse and its roofing, but this steep cone, standing out among the work of much later style, and at the same time bearing such a modern appearance, may appear to detract from the dignity of the building.

THE SOUTH PORCH is the main entrance to the cathedral, for the west door is seldom opened except for ceremonial services. It was built by Abbot Birkenshaw during the reign of Henry VII., and the style is therefore in Late Perpendicular, but the fan vaulting of the roof is modern.

THE INTERIOR

THE NAVE is one of the smallest to be found among those of English cathedrals, and before the restoration was considered bare and cold, but it is now considerably embellished, though not strikingly impressive. It represents the building energies of a long period, and received its final impression when the abbey was no longer as rich and important as it had been in its earlier days. The shrine of St. Werburgh was no longer attracting pilgrims who would leave wealthy gifts behind them. The nave is said to be largely the work of Abbot Simon Ripley, but his Perpendicular clerestory seems to have been built upon a Decorated



THE CHOIR OF CHESTER CATHEDRAL FROM THE LADY CHAPEL
The reredos appears in silhouette against the light in the choir.

arcade, which was probably due to Abbot Richard Seynesbury and represents the period of 1350. There is no true triforium, merely a passage-way cut below the large clerestory windows, and there is no rich sculptured ornament. It is obvious that it was intended to vault the nave in stone, but this was never accomplished, possibly owing to the turbulent condition of the xvth century, and at the restoration it was not considered safe to attempt to carry out the plan. It was therefore decided to use oak, and the result has greatly improved the nave, which had hitherto carried a mean and unworthy roof.

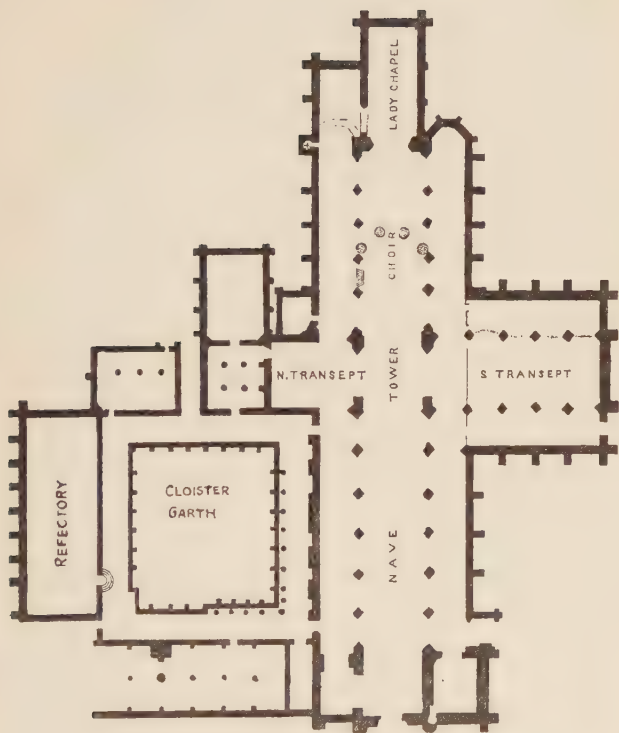
On one of the capitals of the northern arcade of the nave the initials S. R. (for Simon Ripley) can be seen, and on the clerestory window nearest to the tower crossing is a little carved man in chains, put up to frighten away the devil. At one time the nave ended one bay westward of the central tower, the choir occupying the remaining bay, the space beneath the tower and part of the chancel, according to the customary Benedictine rule. Nave and choir were separated by a stone screen or pulpitum, traces of which may still be seen.

The only Norman work which is to be found in the church lies along the north side, which was not altered much in later rebuildings owing to the monastic structures which joined on to it. The whole of the north wall of the nave is Norman, but unfortunately it has lost much of its original appearance from the mosaics which now cover the whole surface. These mosaics, though perhaps excellent in themselves, have nothing in common with such a building as Chester

Cathedral, and otherwise have little to recommend them, being so dingy in tone that they do not even bring any welcome note of colour. To afford space for them all the tablets along the wall were removed, none of them being, we are told, of architectural beauty or historic interest; but it is always a questionable matter whether later generations have a right to sweep away the memorials of the past.

An idea of the appearance of the church of Hugh Lupus is gained from what is now the baptistery, but which was originally the base of the intended north-west tower. Here we get a glimpse of the great Norman columns which once filled the abbey church. The font was brought from Italy and presented by Lord Egerton de Tatton. It is very early work, probably viith or viiith century, and is thought to have been a village well-head in Roman times, and afterwards utilised by the Christians as a font.

THE NORTH TRANSEPT is the most interesting fragment of the Norman church. It is very small, only a fourth part of the size of its fellow on the south side, but in its simplicity and almost crude workmanship we seem to see the hand of the powerful Norman earl urging on the workmen to complete the abbey which he was so eager to see ready for its Benedictine monks. It much resembles part of St. Albans, particularly in the little stumpy pillars of the triforium. The masonry is crude with small stones and very wide mortar joints. The Norman chapel which at one time opened from the eastern side no longer exists, but its position is shown by the blocked-up arch. The question of restoring this feature was considered, but it was feared



PLAN OF CHESTER CATHEDRAL

that if the blocked-up work were removed the strength of the tower might be impaired. There is a fine xvith-century wooden roof on which is to be seen the arms of Cardinal Wolsey, whose connection with the abbey is unknown, beyond the fact that he was the Archbishop of York, and may have therefore come in contact with the abbot of his day.

The chief feature in the north transept to-day is the modern tomb of Bishop John Pearson, whom the Chester of his own generation did not honour with any memorial. Yet he was renowned for his erudition in an age of great scholars, and Bishop Burnet wrote of him that he was "in all respects the greatest divine of the age." He had been a Royalist during the Civil War, losing his living under the Commonwealth, for which he was rewarded at the Restoration by the gift of a royal chaplaincy; and subsequently received various ecclesiastical advancements till he was made Bishop of Chester in 1673. His well-known book *The Exposition of the Creed* has won praise, not only from theologians, but from men as different as Dr. Johnson and the historian Hallam, and has long been regarded as a standard book of English divinity. He was a man of stainless character, and was so equable in temper that he was invaluable at the Savoy Conference, where he won the respect of the Nonconformists for his consideration of his opponents. For a long time it was not known with any exactness where his body rested, but it was found in 1844 and removed finally to its present position, when a movement was set on foot to raise a monument to his memory, which was very largely assisted by American subscriptions.

Where the Norman chapel of the north transept once stood is now the vestry, with a door leading into it from the north choir aisle. The chief interest in the vestry is the beautiful ironwork on a cupboard, which is said to be the work of Thomas de Leghtone, the artist of the beautiful iron grille on the tomb of Queen Eleanor in the Chapel of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey.

Just opposite to the door leading to the vestry the visitor will notice that the floor has been cut away to show the base of one of the Norman piers which once circled the choir, and also that later builders used the capital of one of these piers as a foundation for subsequent work. The original length of the Norman church is shown by a line of marble in the pavement, where the eastern apse used to be.

THE LADY CHAPEL, which is entered from the north choir aisle, was at one time only approached from the choir itself. The monks apparently found that this was awkward, and accordingly lengthened the aisles on the north and south beyond the western end of the Lady Chapel, thus converting two of the original outer windows into internal ones. An opening was then made into the Lady Chapel from each lengthened aisle, an arrangement which still exists on the north side, while the southern choir aisle has been brought back to its original length.

The chapel was erected by Abbot Simon of Whitchurch (1265-1290), and is a good example of Early English work, having a vaulted roof. One of the bosses on the roof represents the martyrdom of St. Thomas of Canterbury, whom the abbey held in

peculiar veneration, as it possessed a girdle which was said to have belonged to the courageous albeit domineering archbishop.

THE SHRINE OF ST. WERBURGH now stands in this chapel, though it is much battered owing to its chequered existence. At the Dissolution it suffered the fate of all shrines, and was much mutilated, the fragments being afterwards utilised as the bishop's throne, in which condition it was found by Thomas Pennant, the well-known writer and traveller, in 1778. He describes it as having "around the upper part a range of small images, designed to represent the kings and saints of the Mercian kingdom. Each held in one hand a scroll with the name inscribed." Fanatical ignorance had mutilated many of the tablets as well as the figures; and when they were restored about the year 1748, the workmen, owing to ignorant direction, replaced the missing heads literally at haphazard—female heads on male shoulders, and *vice versa*.

A new episcopal throne now stands in the choir, and the mutilated remains of the once famous shrine have been patched together, so that a faint impression may be obtained of what it was when pilgrims came from far and near to lay their offerings in the niches on the lower part of the structure. As we learn from the *Holy Lyfe and History of Saynt Werburgh, very frutefull for all Christian people to rede*, written by Bradshaw,¹ the shrine performed many miracles, one of the greatest being the stopping of the great fire which almost destroyed the city in 1180.

¹ See page 33.

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On Sunday in myd lent on the viii hour
Whan every paresshen theyr churches went to
As all Christen people of dutie shulde do
A fyre by infortune rose up sodeinly.

Whan the people sawe their power insufficient
By diligent labour wysdome and policye
To subdue the fire but styll did augment
To Almighty God they dyd call and crye
And to Saynt Werburge the gracious lady
For helpe and succour in suche wretchednes
Wepying and waylyng for woo and heuynes.

(Their appeals were so great that the abbot and convent decide to take out the shrine.)

Toke the holy shryne in prayer and devocion
Syngyng the letanie bare it in procession
Compasyng the fyre in every strete and place
Trustyng in Werburge for helpe aide and grace.

So by the merits of this blessed virgin
The fire began to cesse a myracle clere
Not passyng the place where the holy shryne
Was borne by the bretherne. . . .

The shrine is obviously not the original one which stood in the Norman church, for the sculptures are of the Decorated period, but it represents the shrine as it stood when the abbey was at the height of its power. It was probably erected about the same time that the choir was rebuilt in that very early Decorated period which is a transition from the Early English.

THE CHOIR is the most beautiful and the richest in detail of any part of the cathedral, the work being carried out by Abbot Simon of Whitchurch, who was

fortunate enough to possess the favour of Edward I. The roof, like the nave, was never vaulted in stone, but it has been given a fine fan-vaulted roof in oak, which has replaced a totally inadequate ceiling of plaster. The eastern end is not very satisfactory, for the window is small and placed high up, and the high altar is situated under a simple archway which once was the only entrance to the Lady Chapel. One therefore sees the five lancet windows of the Lady Chapel through this arch, and the somewhat insignificant window above it. The sedilia are declared confidently by some writers to have been in the Church of Saint John, but Dean Howson, who was responsible for so much of the restoration work of 1868, is more cautious, contenting himself with stating that it is an "ancient tradition that these sedilia were originally a gift from the old cathedral church of Saint John." He at the same time admits that a missing canopy of these sedilia was found among the ruins of that church. The choir was at one time cut off from the nave by a stone screen, but this has now been taken down and the organ removed to the north transept, while a light wooden screen shuts off the choir.

In architecture the choir belongs in the spirit to the Early English period, but is already passing into the Decorated style. There are five bays and the appearance of the arcades suggests that there was effected a transformation from the Romanesque similar to that which was made at Exeter, perhaps also at Wells. The piers have the contour of a group of eight columns, and are somewhat sternly massive

in aspect; they have not the unique combination of strength and beauty which is so impressive at Exeter, but are full of restrained grace. From them spring arches of admirable outline, fluted in three concentric divisions, each of three mouldings, corresponding to the three columns which each pier presents to the eye on each of its four sides. In the spandrels of the arches, a little above the actual spring are corbels from which rise the pilasters of the vaulting, which also separate triforium and clerestory into bays.

The triforium is as admirable as the main arcading. Each bay comprises a quadruple arcade with trefoiled arches, simple, almost severe, but chastely beautiful, and thoroughly in keeping with the general design of the building. Above the triforium rises the lofty clerestory, pierced by ten Decorated windows with geometrical tracery, marking the budding promise of that lovely style, and all as fine as any of the period throughout the land. Those of the south choir aisle are of the same period and type: they contrast effectively, without any lack of true harmony, with the more flowing tracery of those on the east side of the great south transept.

On the whole, though it may not be exceptional in any respect, the choir of Chester Cathedral is a very fine example of the architecture of the Transitional Early English-Decorated period. The only comparatively unsatisfying feature is the lack of height in the triforium, but here again this is less noticeable than at Exeter. The general simplicity of the architecture is more than redeemed by its severe grace, and to the building as a whole the wonderful xvth-century

woodwork of the stalls, with its exquisite lacelike delicacy, gives at once an appearance of super-eminent richness and a strange, almost fairylike charm.

The choir stalls are the pride of the cathedral, being compared to the very best in England, indeed Dean Howson, with fervent loyalty, writes, "it may be said with confidence that no stall-work of equal beauty exists in England." Anyone who has made a recent study of those at Manchester may be inclined to query the enthusiastic dean, but the stalls are undoubtedly very fine examples of xvth-century woodwork. Owing to bad treatment in the past they required very costly restoration, but are now in good condition. Of the carvings on the miserere seats one, especially, should be seen by those who have become interested in the patron saint of the Norman abbey, for it illustrates a famous legend of the saintly maiden. The story is that the wild geese at Weedon in Northamptonshire wrought so much destruction by devouring corn and fruit that St. Werburgh was appealed to. One of the abbey servants was told to drive the wild geese into her presence, and to his amazement they meekly obeyed, "their wings trailing, mourning in their manner." The peccant wild-fowl were pardoned and released, after promising good behaviour for the future, but one greedy abbey servant killed and roasted a goose. His sin was discovered, and the missing bird was restored to life by the holy St. Werburgh, who returned it to its rejoicing companions.

The south choir aisle, which is now shorter than the north aisle, contains two monuments of interest. One is an altar tomb, painted and gilded, but whom it

commemorates is not known. There was an absurd story that it covered the body of the Emperor Henry IV., whom we all remember as the proud ruler who sought absolution from Pope Gregory VII. at Canossa. But we have no record that this emperor ever came to England, and there is no doubt that he died at Liège and was buried at Spire. The other tomb is that of Ralph Higden, the author of the *Polychronicon*. It was known that he was buried near a door in the south aisle, but all traces of this opening had disappeared. It was not discovered until the last restoration, when a grave near by was opened and the body of Higden seen for the few moments before it vanished for ever.

The south transept is one of the most striking features in the cathedral, owing to its great size, being as large as the choir, and almost the same size as the nave. The reason for this unusual development was the monks' desire to enlarge their church, probably for the purpose of adding more altars. There was no possibility of additions on the northern side, owing to the conventual buildings which filled up all available space. The abbot therefore decided to enlarge the south transept. But in so doing he ejected the parishioners of St. Oswald, who had been using this transept as their church. The monks built for them a new church close at hand, which was dedicated to St. Nicholas, and proceeded to replace the small Norman transept with the present imposing Decorated edifice. In the xvth century Abbot Ripley added the Perpendicular upper portions, at the same time that he was rebuilding the nave, neither of which ever attained the stone-vaulted roof which was intended. The

parishioners apparently had never been satisfied with their removal; and perhaps the sight of the fine new transept made them regretful of the change, for they insisted on returning to their former chapel, a determination to which the monks were obliged, though very resentfully, to submit. The transept remained a separate chapel, quite distinct from the cathedral, even cut off in 1824 by a solid screen, until 1880, when the parishioners at last agreed to accept a new church, dedicated to St. Thomas, and the perennial dispute, four centuries old, was finally settled. In the meantime the Church of St. Nicholas had fallen from its religious status, and fragments of it are now to be seen in a modern music-hall close to the cathedral.

The south transept is now open to the cathedral, the dividing screen having been pulled down; and in its restored condition it adds considerably to the dignity of the whole building. When first thrown into the cathedral it evidently presented a very depressing aspect, for in 1899 Mr. Francis Bond wrote that it was "a squalid and desolate solitude," while Mr. Charles Hiatt about the same time mourned its "present bare and neglected state" when whitewash disfigured the pillars and capitals. All this neglect has vanished now, and four small chapels on the eastern wall are in use, dedicated to St. George, St. Oswald, St. Nicholas and St. Mary Magdalene. That of St. George, which is the most southerly, is a regimental chapel, devoted to the Cheshire Regiment, possessing the Roll of Honour of all the men who fell in the Great War.

Their bodies are buried in many lands, their names are recorded in the shrine of this chapel, their souls are in God's keeping.

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The reredos of the altar is a beautifully sculptured representation of St. George and the Dragon. Close to this chapel hang the flags of the Cheshire Regiment, an old one being memorable as having been wrapped round the body of Wolfe, after his death on the Heights of Abraham outside Quebec.

The Cheshire Regiment is the 22nd of the British Line, one of the oldest in the service, since its existence dates back to the days of William III., and its colours are rich with battle honours won in almost every quarter of the world. Its principal services were performed abroad and especially in India, but its greatest glory was, perhaps, gained during Sir Charles Napier's conquest of Sind in 1843, at the Homeric Battle of Miani on February 17th, in which about 2800 Anglo-Indian soldiers attacked and fairly defeated a horde of 30,000 Beluchis.

Never was there a conflict waged more thoroughly creditable to all who took part in it. The odds were tremendous, and not only had the Beluchis 18 guns to our 12, and 7000 firearms to 2000, but they are and were very gallant fighting men. They were posted in the dry bed of the River Fulaili, with their left wing of 6000 warriors ensconced in a park surrounded by a high and thick wall, having only a single gate. The idea of their leaders was that as the little British army marched forward to attack their centre, this hidden mass would file out of its park and assail our troops in the rear.

Thus in all confidence, like the Persians at Gaugamela, the barbarian host awaited the attack, while the tiny English force deployed into line and marched

proudly forward, the 22nd leading on the right; three Indian battalions tramping alongside it with a spirit and determination not always so conspicuous as on that day. As the white-headed general led the advance, his keen eyes detected the gate in the park wall and guessed what lay behind. Into the gap he thrust a single company of the 22nd under Captain Tew, bidding him maintain it to the death. Six thousand savage warriors were held paralysed by sixty men of the Cheshire Regiment, while the rest of the little army closed with the dense masses in the Fulaili river-bed. For three desperate hours a battle raged, such as has rarely been known. Tew's solitary company held the gap in the wall as the Spartan Three Hundred defended the Pass of Thermopylæ, and at last the day was ours. Of the little British force 270 were killed and wounded—more than one in ten of the strength actually engaged. Twenty British officers were among them, including Captain Tew, whose constancy had made the victory possible—but Napier's soldiers had actually killed double their own number of the enemy.

Five weeks later Napier gained a second and final victory over the Beluchis at Dabho, and once more the 22nd led the charge and struck the decisive blow, supported this time by the 21st Regiment, besides its Indian comrades of Miani and other Indian troops who had newly joined. Dabho was more easily won than Miani, but still our loss was not slight, and of some 500 men of the 22nd no less than 147 fell. These two battles gave the regiment perhaps its most brilliant war honours, but they are not by any means

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solitary on the mouldering flags suspended in Chester Cathedral.

East and West meet on the colours of the 22nd Regiment, for it was with Amherst and Wolfe in their conquest of Canada forty years before it followed Lord Lake to victory over the elusive Maratha, and eighty before its red line came charging, with bayonets fixed, down into the bed of the Fulaili against the stubborn Beluchis. The whole regiment was at the famous siege of Louisbourg in 1758, and next year its grenadier company formed part of a special battalion made up from the British garrison to serve under Wolfe and named the Louisbourg Grenadiers. It stood in the right wing, and its muskets delivered their fire in that wonderful perfect volley from 4000 barrels which seemed to be one single monstrous shot, and literally killed the soul of the French-Canadian army, so that it streamed away in panic-stricken rout without a thought of resistance left. The Cheshire Regiment helped to conquer India: it helped to conquer Canada. There is no need of more words.

Not far from the banners of the Cheshire Regiment are the flags flown by H.M.S. *Chester* at the Battle of Jutland, May 31st, 1916. The story of her services is more than enough to prove that with whatever weapons they may fight, the yeomen of England are no whit less stubbornly courageous than of old. The *Chester* was scouting ahead of Rear-Admiral Hood's Third Battle Cruiser Squadron, when she ran in the fog against three German cruisers, with whom she fought a most unequal and gallant fight. Her



THE NORMAN COLUMNS OF ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, CHESTER

unarmoured sides were simply riddled with shells, but she gave as good as she got, and in the end won clear, with three guns disabled and some seventy dead and wounded, among them the sixteen-year-old lad John Cornwell, who in death won the Victoria Cross for a devotion to duty which a Spartiate of ancient Greece never equalled.

The monuments in the cathedral are lacking both in great interest and in architectural beauty. There are no splendid mediæval monuments in chantries, no effigies of building abbots, or crusading knights, or heroes of Crécy or Agincourt; nor are there any of the grandiloquent monuments of the XVIIIth century, tremendous in size and reflecting the pomp of Georgian duke or baron. There are a few tablets to some city worthies of the early Stuart period in the south transept, and the south wall of the nave contains some memorials to the former bishops of Chester, none of which are particularly remarkable. There is a small wall monument on the south wall of the south transept to Sir William Gerrade, Chancellor of Ireland under Queen Elizabeth, which is beautifully designed in classic style. A typical early Jacobean monument is to be seen on the south-west pier of the tower—to Thomas Greene, "that grave and worthy citizen" who was mayor of the city, a noted philanthropist, and who had two wives, depicted one on each side of their loving husband, all of them decked out in the stiff and elaborate dress of the time, with its huge ruff. In the south transept on the west wall there is a painted wooden board to John Leche, alderman of the city, who died in 1639, and on one

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of the columns is a bronze plate to Mr. John Philips, merchant, who died in 1607, which bears a curious inscription:

Here lies a Marchand who on earth did trade,
To gaine a Kingdome that should never fade,
An upright conscience his best chosen Frend
Did steere his shipp unto his latest end,
Till hee arrived in Heaven with God his maker,
Who now of endless joyes is made partaker,
Hee led a life scarce blemished with one staine,
Beloved of all and loving all againe.
Uppon Good Friday hee with Christ did die,
That hee with Him might live eternally.

There is one large table monument in the south transept, with recumbent effigy of Hugh Lupus Grosvenor, first Duke of Westminster, who had been a great friend to the cathedral and the city, and whose name recalls the founder of the Norman abbey eight centuries ago.

Before leaving the cathedral one should go into the base of the south-west tower, which was planned by Abbot Birkenshaw, but never completed. It was furnished as a diocesan consistory court by Bishop Bridgeman, who was such an ardent follower of Archbishop Laud. The woodwork and screen are Jacobean, and the whole setting is most quaint and interesting. The arms of Bishop Peploe, who was raised to the bishopric for his loyalty during the Forty-Five, are hanging there. He was vicar of Preston in Lancashire when the forces of Prince Charles Edward marched through it on their desperate attempt to invade England, but was not intimidated by the wild-looking

Highlanders. He continued to pray for King George in his church, and when warned of the risk he was running, replied, "Soldiers, do your duty and I will do mine." When the news of this came to the ears of King George, he said jokingly, "Peep low, he shall peep high, and be a bishop," which he accordingly became.

THE CONVENTUAL BUILDINGS

Chester has every right to be proud of her conventual buildings, for, unlike many of the former monasteries, so much remains that it is quite easy to picture the life of the Benedictine monk of St. Werburgh. One can see him as he studied the illuminated volumes in the *carrels* of the cloisters, washed his hands in the lavatory trough before entering the large refectory, where he sat at his meals while the lector read from the pulpit, as he climbed the stairs to the dormitory, or as he gathered with his brethren in the stately chapter-house on the business of the monastery. In the middle of last century the cloisters were described as in a state of mouldering decay, picturesque in their ruin, with creepers on the walls, but whose restoration was a crying necessity. The work which was restored was in its style very Late Perpendicular, but there were undoubtedly cloisters long before that date, and there seems little question that the Norman doors on the north wall of the nave of the cathedral opened on to Norman cloisters. These cloisters are in an unusual position, for the customary place is on the southern, or sunny side, of the great church, but for some reason

the builders chose the cold northern aspect for the monastic buildings. When the restoration was undertaken in 1868, the whole of the south side of the cloisters had vanished, save for the bases of the vaulting shafts, so that the work on this side is entirely modern. There was evidence to show that the *carrels*, or small studies for the monks, were to be found along this south side, in continuation of those on the west, which still remain. The early abbots were buried in the cloister, and some of their memorial stones may still be seen.

Almost the whole of the west side of the cloister is occupied by a long low room, of Early Norman architecture, with stone vaulting and stumpy Norman columns. There has been some query as to the original use of this chamber, but the most probable suggestion is that it was the large cellar of the monastery, the abbot's own quarters being situated above it. In the days of its greatness the monastery would require vast stores of wine and beer, of salt fish and other commodities, for feeding the community and the guests who were housed in the hospitium or guest-house above, which has now disappeared. The abbot's private chapel was situated above the western walk, at the end nearest the church. One can reach it by a staircase from the baptistery. It is a delightful little building with Norman work in the nave, while the chancel is Jacobean with a moulded stucco ceiling, and a fine Jacobean wooden screen and altar rails. About twenty years ago one writer describes it as full of dirt and wholly unused, but to-day it is well cared for, and serves as the bishop's private chapel.

The west cloister wall was that of the refectory,



CHESTER CATHEDRAL, SHOWING THE CHOIR AND LADY CHAPEL

Drawn by Herbert Raiton.

which ran along its entire side for a length of ninety feet, forming a most beautiful chamber. The monks entered the room by a graceful Early English doorway, with slender shafts and hanging foliage. The lavatory was adjacent to this door, a trough standing in the recess in the wall under three moulded arches of Early English date. It is curious to note how the Perpendicular builders of the cloisters thrust the ribs of their shafts among the Early English work, obviously with little respect for the construction of their forerunners. The arms of Henry VIII. and Cardinal Wolsey may be observed on the bosses and corbels.

THE REFECTORY was built by Abbot Simon of Whitchurch, that energetic abbot who won the favour of Edward I., and who did so much for the enrichment of the abbey. The main structure of the hall is of the XIIIth century, though the east window was altered in Perpendicular days. It has seen many changes and many vicissitudes of fortune, for after being the great dining-hall of the monks, it became at the Dissolution the chief classroom of the King's School, when it suffered as all schoolrooms are bound to do. Many a well-known man has been taught there, among them Randolph Caldecott, the artist, and George Ormerod, the historian of Cheshire. The special feature of the refectory is the wall pulpit and staircase, a delicate construction in the Early English style which has survived the disasters of nearly four centuries. The lector read from this pulpit during meal-time selections from the Scriptures or the writings of the Fathers of the Church. While not being absolutely unique (there are several similar survivals — at Cleeve, Beaulieu

and elsewhere), there are not many pulpits remaining in such excellent condition. The refectory is no longer used as a schoolroom, new buildings having been acquired for King Henry VIII.'s School, and it has been carefully restored until it now bears very much its appearance at the end of the monastic period. When there are gatherings of the Great Chapter of the cathedral, breakfast and dinner are served in the refectory as of old, and it is being more and more restored to its old condition. The buttery hatch to the kitchen can be seen at the west end, and above it was a gallery which may eventually be restored. Altogether the refectory is one of the happiest results of the vigorous restoration which the cathedral has undergone, for it had been grievously damaged, but is now an integral part of the life of the diocese.

At the end of the north cloister, in the eastern wall, is a doorway leading into a vaulted room called the "parlour," which has recently been fitted up as a writing and reading room for the use of the clergy of the diocese. It was previously used for the lowly purpose of storing coal! Close by is the staircase which at one time led to the dormitory of the monks, now existing no longer.

Next to the parlour, on the east side of the cloisters, is the slype, or passage-way, which led to the outer buildings of the monastery, and just beyond it is the entrance to the vestibule of the chapter-house. This vestibule is Early English, built under Abbot Simon of Whitchurch, and is remarkable for the fact that there are no capitals to the pillars which run up to the vaulting without any break. The monks were wont to gather here before going into the daily assemblage



THE STONE PULPIT IN THE REFECTORY OF CHESTER CATHEDRAL

When the building was a part of the domestic side of the abbey, the pulpit was used by the lector who read aloud during meals.

in the chapter-house, and it is used to-day by the choir and clergy previously to entering the cathedral in procession.

THE CHAPTER-HOUSE is a fine example of XIIIth-century architecture, with lancet windows of simple dignity. The detached shafts of these lancets are an interesting feature. All the Norman earls from Hugh Lupus to Randle Blundeville, with the exception of the young Earl Richard, who was drowned at the sinking of the "White Ship," are believed to be buried beneath the chapter-house. The founder of the abbey, Hugh Lupus, was first interred in the churchyard of the abbey, but Randle, his nephew, removed his body to the place of greater dignity. His grave was thought to have been discovered in 1724, when some excavation brought to light a stone coffin bearing a wolf's head, but there seems no certainty of this as the initials of R. S. in cypher scarcely suggest Hugh Lupus. The chapter-house is used for its original purpose, and also as the library. Here is kept a copy of Ralph Higden's *Polychronicon*.

The conventual buildings of the abbey occupied a large portion of the mediæval city encompassed by the massive walls, which bounded the abbey on the north and east. The precincts were entered by the abbey gate, which Pennant admirably describes as "a plain but noble entrance," consisting "of two Gothic arches included within a round one, of greater diameter, and which appears to have been of far older date." This gateway, which still exists, dates from the XIVth century, and leads into what is now known as the Abbey Square, but which was once the great court-

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yard of the princely monastery. On the right was the house of the abbot, whose extensive dwelling was afterwards converted into the episcopal palace, now ousted by the modern building in which King Henry VIII.'s School is housed. The other sides of the great court were occupied by the various offices of the abbey, such as the brewhouse and bakery. The bishop, the dean and some of the clergy now reside in the houses overlooking the Abbey Square, and one can confidently assert that they no longer deserve the condemnation bestowed on them by Dean Swift, who wrote:

The church and clergy here, no doubt,
Are very near akin;
Both weather-beaten are without,
And empty both within.

CHAPTER III

THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST,
CHESTER

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THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST, CHESTER

o visitor to Chester can fail to notice, as he makes the inevitable tour of the city walls, the pile of picturesque ruins lying on the eastern side, just above the river and between the walls and Grosvenor Park. These ruins and the somewhat dull building of modern aspect alongside, are the remains of the great collegiate church of St. John the Baptist, with a history extending back as far as that of St. Werburgh's Abbey, and boasting nothing short of cathedral rank. It was just one of the chances of fortune that St. John's was not chosen at the Dissolution to be the cathedral of the new diocese of Chester, for it almost might have claimed the right, having enjoyed the privilege many centuries before. When William the Conqueror ordered the Norman bishops, who so soon replaced all the Saxon holders of the sees, to remove to the largest towns in their dioceses, Peter, the first Norman bishop of the vast diocese of Lichfield and Coventry, chose Chester in preference to Lichfield, which was described as "a sordid and desert place." The abbey church being held by a monastic order, the bishop selected St. John's as his cathedral, and proceeded to plan a Norman church of great size and splendour.

80 Church of St. John the Baptist

It is not questioned that Bishop Peter found an existing Saxon church on the site of St. John's, but the date of its erection is not certain. Henry Bradshaw, who wrote the poetical life of the saint, was, however, not bothered by such doubts. He wrote definitely:

The year of grace, six hundred fourescore and nyen,
As sheweth myne auctour, a Bryton Giraldus,
Kynge Ethelred, myndyne most the blysse of Heven,
Edyfyed a College Churche notable and famous
In the suburbs of Chester pleasant and beauteous
In the honor of God, and the Baptyst Saynt Johan,
With helpe of bysshop Wulfrice and good exortacion.

Now it is not unreasonable to believe the monk's story, for King Æthelred, who succeeded Wulfhere, the father of St. Werburgh, as King of Mercia in 675, is known to have founded and endowed monasteries. He had a long reign of thirty years, most of which were passed in complete peace, after he had, in the early part of his reign, overcome the Northumbrians, regaining the province of Lindiswaras (the modern Lincolnshire), and subdued Kent. His rule was then acknowledged from the Humber to the English Channel, making him undisputed lord over all central England. It is said that he became "disquieted in his mind, because of his cruelties," and to expiate his crimes he built monasteries, into one of which he retired in 704, giving up his throne to Kenred, the brother of St. Werburgh, who had been too young to succeed his father. It is further recorded that "King Æthelred, minding to build a church, was told that where he should see a white hind, there he should



THE NAVE OF ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, CHESTER
From the south transept.

From a drawing by C. Wild, engraved by H. le Keux, dated 1812.

build a church; which white hind he saw in the place where St. John's Church now standeth."

In support of this early date of the church—689—there is the discovery of the curious pre-Norman crosses found in 1870, when the ruins of the choir and chantry chapels were excavated. They are so unusual that archæologists have not been able to give any definite decision concerning their date, but they are perhaps attributable to the middle of the ixth century.

On the other hand, the finding of some Saxon coins in 1862, at a depth of sixteen feet, has made historians think that the Æthelred mentioned was not the King of Mercia, but the Lord or Ealdorman of Mercia, who married Æthelflaed, the daughter of King Alfred, and died about 911. The coins are of the period of Edward the Elder, from the mints of Canterbury and York, and are probably "foundation coins," and if so, this would not allow an earlier date than 911.

In 972 it is known that King Edgar the Peaceful, who had become overlord of the whole of England, came to Chester and, according to tradition, was rowed on the river Dee by eight tributary kings. Bradshaw writes:

From the castell he went to the water of Dee
By a prime posterne through walles of the towne
The Kynge toke his barge with mych rialte
Rowyng upwards to the Church of Saynt Johan
The forsayd viii Kynges with him went alone
King Edgar kept the sterne as most principall
Each prince had an ore to labour with all.

This Saxon church, built either in 689 or about

82 Church of St. John the Baptist

906, was repaired in 1037 by the same Earl Leofric of Mercia who had restored the abbey church of St. Werburgh, but of whose work, either in abbey or church, nothing now remains. Bishop Peter doubtless pulled down the Saxon building and began a cathedral on majestic lines, in cruciform shape, having nave, choir and transepts, and with the scheme of adding a central tower and two western towers. He lived until 1085, when he was buried in the cathedral of which he had seen the choir and transepts completed. His successor, Robert de Limesay, preferred Coventry as the place of his residence, and so left St. John's in an unfinished condition, with only the arcade of the nave completed. St. John's was never in the hands of monks, for though it has sometimes been loosely called a monastery, it was always occupied by the secular clergy, a body of seven canons, with a dean, who did not live a thoroughly communal life, but had their own houses, situated close to the church. The canons, when the bishop had left St. John's, were unable to complete the church on the original plan, and for some time the nave was roofless. Although at a later period the beautiful Transitional triforium was added, the south-west tower was never finished.

The wealth of the neighbouring owners of land flowed into the coffers of St. Werburgh, who possessed the shrine of the saintly virgin, and St. John's never attracted great endowments, remaining a moderately wealthy collegiate church. At the Dissolution the landed property was not much greater than that recorded in *Domesday Book*, about a tenth part of that of the adjacent abbey. The revenues are estimated

to have amounted to about £1600 in the values of 1913, which would have allowed £300 to the dean and £150 to each of the canons as their respective annual stipends. With the change of religion the abbey received the first blow, the monks being turned out in 1541, whereas the college at St. John's was spared until 1547, when the spirit of reform under Edward VI. was at its height.

The commissioners did their work systematically, and their report is very businesslike, though it reads to-day as brutally callous:

The bodye of the same church thowghte sufficient to s'ue the said p'ishoners w^t the charge of xxli, so that the hole chunsell, w^t the twoo isles may be reserved for the King's ma^{tie} having upon them lead to the quantatie of xxxiiij ffathers—Bells belonging to the said College, and as yett hanging in the church of ye said College—ffye—Whereof it is thowghte sufficient to contynew—one—And ye resydew may be taken for ye King's magistie and worth by estimacion MMMVc lb.

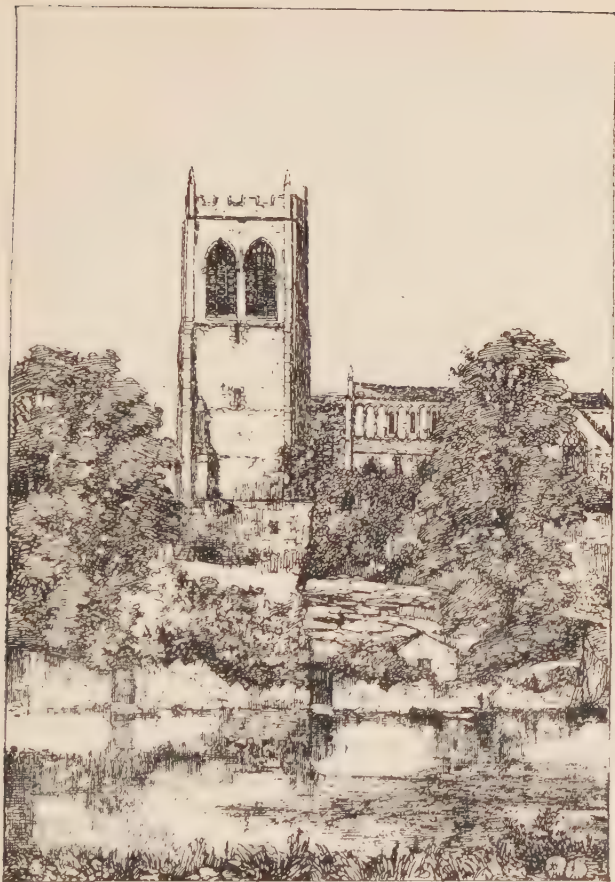
From this statement it is possible to learn what had really happened. The parishioners had pleaded for the church to be retained for their use, and were thus allowed the nave and one bell, and the munificent endowment of £20 for the services of a vicar. But the rest of the great church, with the valuable lead upon the roof, was reserved for his majesty, and one can see the ruthless hands tearing off the lead and melting it down for the purpose of removal. The clergy themselves were not treated badly, for they were pensioned off, while the dean, Richard Walker, who surrendered the college in 1547, was made dean of the new cathedral in 1558, a position he held for nine years.

84 Church of St. John the Baptist

The advowson was granted to Sir Christopher Hatton, and it came through various families, until it was bought by Earl Grosvenor in 1810.

Two towers of the church were standing when the commissioners visited it in 1547—the central one and that to the north-west—for only the foundations of the south-west tower were ever achieved. The central tower had fallen in 1468, destroying the choir, but the canons had rebuilt it soon afterwards. In 1572 it fell again, and was not this time restored, the parish being too poor, but two years later a fresh disaster occurred in the fall of the north-west tower. It brought down with it the west end, which had to be rebuilt. In 1581 the parishioners obtained full possession of the church from Queen Elizabeth, and they then proceeded to make the remaining structure sound, taking down all unsafe portions. The transepts were reduced to the width of the aisles, and the tower, when rebuilt, remained a conspicuous landmark in Chester for three centuries.

The Civil War brought great calamity to St. John's, for being outside the walls it was occupied by the forces of the Parliament, and during a space of four months was used as a point of attack. Guns were placed in the tower from which to batter the walls, so gallantly defended by the Royalists, who only surrendered when famine had rendered it impossible to continue resistance. After the troops had evacuated St. John's the whole interior had to be refitted and refurnished, for everything susceptible to damage had been destroyed, and not a scrap of silver plate is earlier than the Restoration. One further disaster



ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, CHESTER, FROM THE RIVER DEE

The tower fell suddenly at 10 p.m. on 14th April, 1881, and has not been rebuilt.

From a drawing by Mr. A. Rimmer published in "Chester as it was."

came to St. John's in 1881, when the north-west tower again fell, bringing with it the great north porch.

Mr. Thomas Hughes, the archæologist, gives a vivid account of this calamity:

I was sitting alone in my room, and actually reading Ormerod's description of St. John's at the very instant, ten o'clock [p.m.], when the crash of masonry, mingled with the sound of tinkling bells, fell upon my ear! The conviction at once seized me that the great tower had succumbed, for the imminence of its fall had been for some days past manifest to all who, like myself, had watched the widening cracks in the eastern and northern faces of the structure. I was on the spot in a few minutes and realised at once all my worst fears; for there, palpable in the moonlight to every eye, ran a fearful chasm up the northern face of the steeple; the belfry being exposed, but the bells still all, as it now turned out, standing, though awaiting, as it seemed to every one, an all but certain destiny ere a few hours should pass by! It was a night to daze the head, and wellnigh disorder the brain, of one who reverences and revels in the treasures of the past!

No attempt has been made to rebuild the tower, but the porch has been replaced by an exact copy of the Early English one which had been destroyed. Mr. John Douglas, a Chester architect, had fortunately taken accurate measurements and drawings before the disaster, and thus was able to supply the whole of the details. The bells have been hung in a small belfry, and the exterior of the church to-day presents an entirely modern appearance, having no towers, no outline to arrest attention, and nothing whatever to indicate the antiquity which is to be found within.

88 Church of St. John the Baptist

If the ruins outside escape notice it might be possible to pass the church as being entirely without interest.

What remains is a splendid fragment of the great Norman church, planned on a grand scale by Bishop Peter. It is thought that he probably saw the nave arcade completed, for the massive cylindrical columns with their simple scalloped capitals belong to his period. The triforium and clerestory above are Transitional, built about 1190, and according to Mr. J. H. Parker, "a finer specimen of a Triforium and Clerestory combined does not exist." When the parishioners in 1581 had to restore the church, they built walls at the ends of the transepts which they had shortened until they were only the width of the nave aisles, and owing to the decay of the choir, due to the stripping of the lead, they built an eastern wall enclosing only one bay of the original choir which had formerly consisted of five bays. One notices that the piers which supported the central tower are of later date than the nave arcade, and that the side aisles are about the same period as the Transitional triforium. The four stone sedilia which are now to be seen in the cathedral are claimed by Canon Cooper Scott, the present rector, to have originally belonged to St. John's, and to have been removed in 1541. A canopy of one was still at St. John's until it was given to the cathedral at the restoration in 1876.

When the collegiate church was flourishing the dean had his house on the outer precincts, and two chapels, St. Anne's and St. James's, stood, one to the north-east (where the public park now is), and the other to the south-west of the main church. There were two

anchorites' cells in connection with St. James's Chapel, one of which still remains. A tradition clung to these cells that King Harold had passed the end of his life there, after the great defeat at Hastings, where it is said he was not killed, but only wounded; and another story claims that he was buried behind the Cross in St. John's Church. Professor Freeman has ruthlessly removed this interesting theory, by asserting bluntly that "Harold was undoubtedly slain in the great battle, and buried at first under a heap of stones—*aggere sub lapidem*—on the seashore; and that his body was afterwards removed to Waltham Abbey." Even at the present day one has to admit such curiosities of human credulity as that which induces certain folk to believe that Lord Kitchener is still living.

A dwelling-house was built over the crypt of St. James's Chapel by Sir Robert Cotton, and it is interesting to know that the famous Thomas de Quincey lived there with his mother for a short time, in the house which he describes as "the pretty gem which suddenly was offered, at a price unintelligibly low, in the ancient city of Chester." He speaks of himself as resting in the "deep monastic tranquillity of St. John's Priory"—having concluded apparently that the ruins must necessarily be of a monastic establishment. The house in which he lived was afterwards taken down, and of the chapel only the crypt remains.

As one wanders among the pathetic ruins of the great church, which once stood a distinctive landmark on its red sandstone cliff above the swift-flowing river, and is now only a headless trunk, one understands something of the misery of poor Mr. Hughes when

he stood on that moonlit night and watched the crashing fall of the tower, which was the pride of Chester. Canon Cooper Scott may well write sadly that the church was appropriately named, when we remember the saying of the Baptist, "He must increase, but I must decrease," for the cathedral church of Christ in Chester has never lost ground, whereas that of St. John the Baptist is a mere remnant of its former self. Even as late as 1857 the Rev. Francis Grosvenor could write of St. John's:

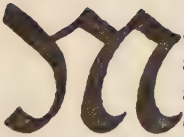
Its commanding position, the massive grandeur of its proportions, and the historical memories which still cling to it after the lapse of ages, at once attract the notice of the visitors who year by year throng the streets and walls of Chester, and to those who dwell within sight of its majestic tower, it must be a never-failing object of admiration and interest.

Twenty-four years later the tower crashed, and robbed Chester of one of its most memorable features.

CHAPTER IV
MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL

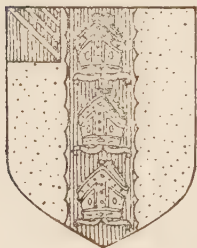
CHAPTER IV

MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL

anchester, although a place of great antiquity, its associations dating back at least to the days of Agricola's campaign, has only achieved the dignity of a cathedral city within recent years. This at first sight seems strange, in face of the immense size and importance of the city of to-day, particularly when one recollects the quiet southern towns which have been honoured with a cathedral for centuries past. But a glance at the past history of Manchester will explain much. Throughout the Middle Ages, England knew nothing of the great city on the Irwell, no battles were contested in its neighbourhood, no mighty lords held their feudal power there, and even the monks who spread their abbeys so widely over the land, founded no great establishment to excite the envy and cupidity of the later monarchs. It is true that the Romans discovered it and built a fort at the meeting place of the Irwell with the Medlock, and thus gave the name to Manchester, but the geographical position of Lancashire cut it off from easy communication with London or

York, or any of the great centres, before the xvth century. Lancashire was far from the main route to Scotland, was just north of the ways into Wales, boglands hindered approach from the south, and the Pennine range of hills on the east separated it from easy access to Yorkshire.

This isolation kept the history of Manchester a purely local one, and perhaps made it a very desirable place during some of the periodical wars of the Middle Ages, for it has achieved no fame from long-sustained siege or wholesale massacre. The town grew slowly



THE ARMS OF THE SEE
OF MANCHESTER

from the days of the early settlements, when apparently the Saxons had a church on the site of the present cathedral. Cloth weaving was already one of the occupations of the townsfolk by the beginning of the xivth century, when Thomas Gresley, who owned the barony of Manchester, gave a charter in 1301 to the "burgesses" of the town. Two and a half centuries later it was decided that Manchester was

not a borough, but only a market town, and the city had to wait till 1832 before it was acknowledged as a parliamentary borough. Early in the xvth century Leland had visited Manchester and found it "the fairest, best builded, quickkest, and most populous toune in all Lancastreshire." But he was obviously surprised that it possessed only one parish church, though that was a large one, double-aisled, and recently collegiated.



THE NAVE AND CHOIR SCREEN OF MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL

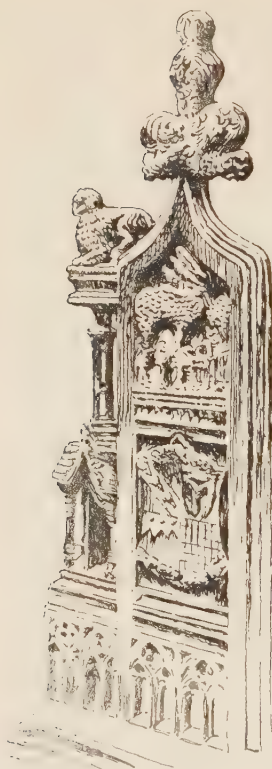
The Earliest Church at Manchester 97

There is no great certainty about the first church which stood upon the wooded rock which marked the joining of the Irk with the larger river Irwell. A wooden building of Saxon date may have existed, but some authorities think that the proofs are slender. Yet an early carved stone found in the cathedral in 1871, showing an angel, possibly representing the Annunciation, and bearing an inscription, seems to point to a church of some importance in the xth century. And *Domesday Book* mentions two churches—"the church of St. Mary, and church of St. Michael hold one carucate of land, quit of all taxation except the Danegelt."

Of any Norman church there is no record whatever, and Mr. J. S. Crowther, writing in 1893 on the "Architectural History of the Cathedral of Manchester," says: "I can only suggest that the old Saxon church was so well and so massively constructed as to survive all the accidents of war and ravages of time, up to the close of the xiiith century."

During the great restoration which took place during the xixth century, enough evidence was obtained from the structure itself, and from the stones re-used by the later builders, to be certain that a large Early English church was erected in the xiiith century. The nave of this church remained till it was replaced by the beautiful Perpendicular work which can still be seen, though all the stones have been renewed.

The chancel of the Early English church was rebuilt in the Decorated style in the xivth century, when the church must have been the same length as it is to-day,



A DESK STANDARD IN
THE CHOIR OF MANCHESTER
CATHEDRAL

It shows the arms of the Stanleys and, above, a sculptured panel given larger on p. 117.

with the exception of the modern western porch. The oldest part of the cathedral still existing is a portion of this Decorated chancel, consisting of the lower part of the walls and the western arch of the Lady Chapel.

By the xvth century there is documentary evidence for the cathedral's subsequent growth. Before this period one has to be satisfied with conjecture, made practically certain from the proofs afforded by the structure itself, but lacking the accuracy of dates, which is always somewhat disappointing. However, one cannot help agreeing with the writer in the Victoria County History that "there is ample interest in the architectural history of the building from the xvth century onwards." The particular year in which the searchlight of history gleams with especial force on the cathedral is 1422,

when the simple parish church of Manchester was raised to the higher rank of a collegiate church. It is from this date that we begin to know much concerning the subsequent builders and their work.

The first owners of the barony of Manchester were the Gresleys (or Grelleys, as they are sometimes known), whose male line became extinct in 1313, when the estates went to the De la Warres, who had married into the family. A little over a century later Thomas, Lord de la Warre, who was then owning the property, became a priest, and was himself the last rector of the parish church. He applied to Henry V. for a charter to make it a college and endowed it with funds to maintain the necessary clergy, consisting of a warden or dean, eight priests, four deacons and six boy choristers.

John Huntingdon became the first warden in 1422. He must have found a large church with an Early English nave, and a chancel and Lady Chapel of the Decorated period. He evidently was desirous of enriching the church and perhaps thought the chancel was not spacious enough for the new choir, for he rebuilt the whole of the choir and Lady Chapel, the plan of the present chancel being essentially his, though much of his actual work has been reconstructed. Only the eastern walls and the south wall of the south aisle of the choir remain of the beautiful Perpendicular work which was then the prevailing style in England.

Ralph Langley, who was warden from 1465 to 1481, was the next great builder. He felt that the Early

English nave was too dark and severe for the lightness and elegance of the Perpendicular chancel, and so rebuilt it completely from the ground, in the same style as Huntingdon had used for the choir. The nave as it now stands reveals the beauty and grace of his work, though unfortunately all the stonework has had to be restored, stone by stone, owing to the brutal treatment which the church underwent in the early sixteenth century.

The chancel received a further alteration under a famous warden, James Stanley, son of the first Earl of Derby, who widened the choir to admit the splendid carved stalls, and under whose hands the church received the form it was to hold up to the present day, except for the very recent addition of the western porch.

From this brief account of the building history of the cathedral we can summarise the following: (1) That it is probable that a Saxon church stood upon the site; (2) that it is almost certain that a large Early English church was built in the thirteenth century; (3) that a Decorated choir replaced the Early English one in the fourteenth century; (4) that the whole church was rebuilt in the fifteenth century in the Perpendicular style, the chancel in the early part of the century, then the nave, and finally the chancel, being brought to its present condition quite late in the century.

The church remained collegiate from the time it was established in 1422 until it was raised to the dignity of a cathedral in 1847. During its four centuries the college had suffered some vicissitudes, being twice dissolved, the first time under the reforming zeal of



A FIGURE OF ST. GEORGE ON THE SCREEN OF THE LADY
CHAPEL OF MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL

It is on the north side of the pulpitum or screen, and gives
access to the triforium.

Edward VI., and the second by the Commonwealth. Queen Mary had restored the college in 1553, after its first dissolution, and Charles II. had re-established it at the Restoration, after which it remained in peaceful possession till 1847, when the diocese of Manchester was created. Before this the parish of Manchester had been in the diocese of Chester, but the population of Lancashire had increased so much that it was found impossible for any one bishop to deal with so large a diocese, making the creation of the bishopric of Manchester a pressing necessity. It was then decided to make the collegiate church into the cathedral for the new diocese.

Having obtained a general idea of the growth of the building, it is now possible to examine the cathedral in more detail. One must frankly confess that the exterior is not impressive in the manner which one expects from an English cathedral. The size is not much greater than that of a large parish church to be met with in many towns; and one looks in vain for anything to compare with the central tower of Canterbury, the soaring spire of Salisbury, or the great western front of Peterborough. And above all, the quiet serenity and dignified calm, so much associated with a cathedral, are lacking in the busy city of Manchester. Owing to its previous history, there is no close, with shaven grass, and stately trees, or old houses, creeper-clad, the residences of former dignitaries of the church, but instead there is the roar of ceaseless traffic, the rumbling of trains, the rattle of tramcars, the thundering of wheels over the cobbled roads. The cathedral stands close to the main station,

with busy streets all round, and the river which once ran clear and sweet below its rocky bank, now flows



MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL FROM THE WEST END
Showing the Perpendicular tower and the western porch which
is a modern addition.

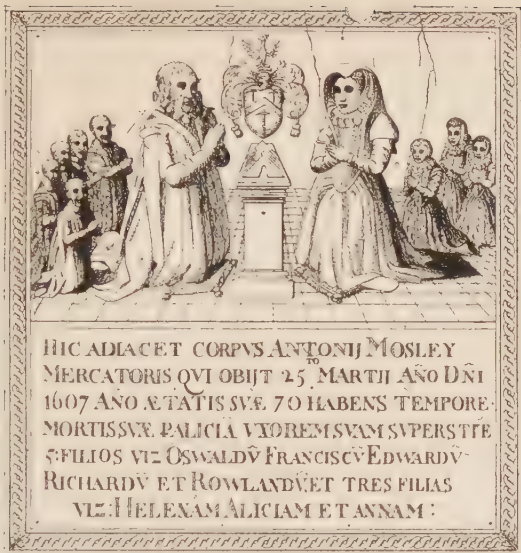
inky, dark and unnoticed by the busy passers-by, who have forgotten the enthusiasm of their predecessors when the right of free fishing was obtained! Blackened

by smoke, the cathedral stands in the heart of the city, not as a mere relic of a mediæval past, beautiful but out of date, but as a living part of one of the great cities of the world, taking an active share in the life and thought of the people. Anyone who has been present at one of the Sunday evening services, when not a seat is vacant in the great nave, may possibly regret from an æsthetic point of view the lack of the atmosphere of antiquity, but at the same time will be forced to admit that the cathedral of Manchester is fulfilling its purpose, and is perhaps more representative of so modern and forceful a city than any building merely redolent of antiquity could be.

Of any marks of time in the shape of old stonework the exterior of the cathedral gives one nothing, for it has been necessary to renew all the external masonry within the last century. The western tower was taken down and rebuilt in 1863, only a fragment of the inner eastern wall being left. The western porch, placed right in front of the tower and detracting somewhat from its height, is a very recent addition. The north porch dates from 1888, while the south porch has had many reconstructions, being rebuilt in the xviiith century by a merchant of the city of the name of Bibby, and again in 1891 by Mr. James Jardine of Manchester and Alderley Edge.

THE NAVE. Entering the cathedral by this porch one is at once struck by the great width of the nave with its double aisles, the largest in England with the exception of St. Helen's at Abingdon, near Oxford. The beauty of the Perpendicular piers can be observed

even on a dark day, but the fine carved oak roof is often lost in gloom, unless one has the luck to catch one of Manchester's rare sunny days, when the light streams through the southern clerestory windows and lights up the bosses and carved angels which form the finials of the main beams. The roof of the nave has been considerably repaired, but much of the original work remains, leaving it one of the fine features of the cathedral. There are fourteen angelic figures, seven on each side, those on the south side playing stringed instruments and those on the north using wind instruments. The great width of the nave and aisles is due to the drastic restoration of 1815, or as one writer puts it, the "barbarous work of mutilation" in the name of repair. It was the dreadful period when galleries were considered essential, and almost every church in the country destroyed its original beauty by thrusting galleries where they were never intended. In order to receive the galleries, all the mediæval chapels on the north and south sides of the nave were swept away with their beautiful carved wooden screens. The chapels of St. Nicholas and St. George on the south side, and the chapels of St. James and the Holy Trinity on the north were ruthlessly removed, and men with picks came into the nave hacking the surface of the stonework, which was then covered with cement three-quarters of an inch thick. The aisles were treated in an equally brutal manner, for not only were the chapels cleared away, but the elaborate roofs, with their beautifully carved bosses, were coated over with plaster after being covered with nails. A little over half a century elapsed



THE BRASSES TO ANTONY MOSLEY, AN ELIZABETHAN
MERCHANT (DIED 1607), AND (BELOW) OSWALD,
HIS ELDEST SON (DIED 1630)
Both Brasses are in the Chapter-House of Manchester
Cathedral.

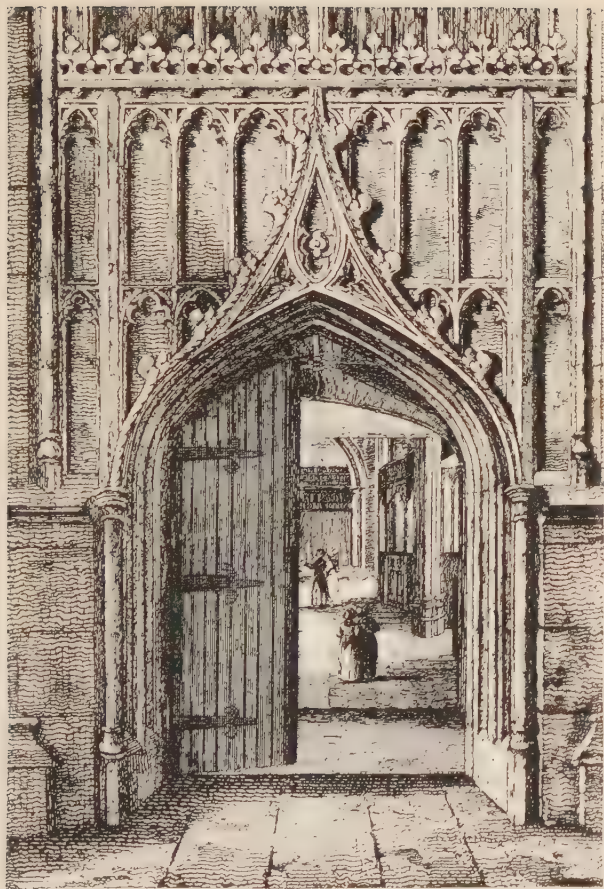
before it was realised how terrible had been the "restoring" energy of 1815, and it was then found that the cement had so ruined the beautiful xvth-century stonework that it was no longer strong enough to remain. In 1872 a careful restoration began—all the cement was cleared off, and the nave piers restored, stone by stone, so that we see to-day an accurate copy of the nave erected by Warden Langley. The roof of the nave was at one time coloured, but when the galleries were occupying the nave aisles it was washed over with one general tone of colour, and now, since its restoration in 1884, it is plain unpainted oak. Unfortunately the aisles had been too fiercely attacked to recover from their treatment, and when the galleries were removed new roofs had to replace the old. The rood screen under the chancel arch now supports the organ. Much of the lower part is the original xvth-century woodwork, the cornice and fan tracery being added at the restoration of 1872.

When standing in the nave of the cathedral one sees to-day the style and plan of the building as Warden Langley erected it in the xvth century, but the romance of the actual stonework has been lost owing to the ignorant carelessness of the early xixth-century restorers, and only the roof and the rood screen remain of the handiwork of the mediæval craftsmen. But the darkness and gloom which so often prevail in the cathedral give a sense of age, which a less smoke-haunted atmosphere might remove, and the whole effect of the nave is one of dignity and grace.

THE CHOIR. On entering the choir we leave behind us the modern work, and enter upon the church as

it was known to the users of the collegiate church in the xvith century. This was the choir, built and fitted by one of the best-known of the wardens, the third of the famous trio of building wardens who left the collegiate church almost as it stood till modern times. Warden Stanley was the youngest son of Thomas, the first Earl of Derby, and by his connection with such a powerful and wealthy family was apparently able to obtain all the funds necessary for his building schemes. There is still great discussion as to why he rebuilt the choir, which had only been erected some fifty years before by his predecessor, John Huntingdon, the first warden. Various theories are propounded concerning the work he actually did, but apparently he found the choir too small for the beautiful stalls which he intended to place there for the greater honour of the college, and therefore proceeded to widen it by taking down the arcades and adding a clerestory. He seems to have used Huntingdon's old roof, as the warden's rebus, of a man with dogs hunting, and a tun or barrel, is to be found on one of the beams on the south side, while Stanley's own symbol of the eagle is also represented.

Though somewhat lax in his clerical vows, James Stanley, who became the fifth warden in 1485, must be remembered with gratitude by those who enjoy the rich beauty of the building which he has left behind him. He was better fitted to be a soldier, or secular statesman, than a priest, being a very energetic and capable man of affairs, and described in the *Metrical History of the House of Stanley* as "a goodly tall man as was in all England, and spedd well all



THE PERPENDICULAR NORTH DOOR OF MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL
BEFORE THE RESTORATION IN 1818



THE CHOIR OF MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL

As it appeared in 1844 before the organ was placed upon the screen.

From a drawing by T. Allom, engraved by E. Challis.

matters that he took in hand." In Church advancement he made great strides, becoming Bishop of Ely in 1506. He probably owed this preferment to the power of his family connections, and particularly to his stepmother, the Lady Margaret, Countess of Richmond and Derby, who had become his father's second wife, and who is known by her beautiful tomb in Westminster Abbey, in the chapel of Henry VII.—her famous son by her first marriage. It is reasonable to conjecture that his mother would have considerable influence with her royal son and would be able to assist her Stanley stepsons. There is a story concerning Henry VII. told in connection with one of the carved hand-rests of the choir stalls erected by Warden James Stanley, which represents a fool's head. Henry is said to have taken a progress into Lancashire in 1495 "to make merie with his mother, the Countesse of Derby, wh. then laie at Lathome in the countrie," which was the chief seat of the earl



A DESK STANDARD IN THE CHOIR
OF MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL

The quarterings are those of
the house of De la Warre.

at that time. Earlier in the same year the king had caused Sir William Stanley, the earl's brother, to be executed, and though such events may have been more or less ordinary occurrences in the xvth century, yet one is somewhat surprised that he should expect to "make merie" at Lathom, the family home of the unfortunate man. Tradition states that when the royal guest was being shown the great house, he was taken on to a high roof unprotected by any battlements. The earl's fool drew close to his master and whispered, "Tom, remember Will," the suggestion being sufficiently obvious. The king overheard and quickly retired from so dangerous a position, where revenge might so easily have been satisfied. Be that as it may, Henry VII. had rewarded the Earl of Derby richly for his services in deserting Richard III. on the field of Bosworth, and we know that he visited Manchester in 1495, the first sovereign to honour the city.

As Bishop of Ely, James Stanley was not pre-eminent for piety, for it was well known that he had broken his vow of celibacy, one son (or grandson) fighting at Flodden in 1513, where he was knighted for bravery. But if not a saint, the bishop was active in loyalty to his king and against the Scottish foe. He received orders from the Earl of Surrey, who was then commanding the English forces, to summon the shire in the king's name, and to see that the men were in battle array. From these orders it is evident that the bishop was at Lathom, for he was no longer warden of Manchester when James IV. was invading England with the army which caused such serious alarm. The bishop, "full bolde" as the poem describes him, saw

that the orders were well and thoroughly carried out.

He died in 1515, and is buried in the chapel known as the Ely Chapel, a chantry opening from the larger chapel which the bishop was building on the north side of the choir—"my new chapel now in building at Manchester," as he designated it in his will. His grandson, Sir John Stanley, probably carried out his grandfather's wishes, as he was one of the executors. A plain altar tomb of grey marble was put up by the south wall of the chantry, the nearest to the main body of the church, the chapel of St. John the Baptist, and on it was placed a brass showing the bishop in episcopal robes, with the arms of Stanley quartered with those of Ely. The lower part of the tomb has had to be restored, and some parts of the brass figure are



BRASS TO JAMES STANLEY IN
MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL¹

¹ He was warden of the college and afterwards Bishop of Ely, and died in 1515, according to Godwin "without performing

missing, but the inscription remains complete and invites us "off yur charite pray for the soule of James Stanley sūtyme bushype of Ely and Warden of this Colledge of Manchester." It used to be said that the bishop had died under sentence of excommunication, but Canon Raine asserted that there was no evidence for this, nor that his body was refused admittance within the church. If this denial be correct, the story of the burial of the body as near to the church as possible, and the erection of a small chantry over the tomb, is a fabrication. It is known that the bishop was anxious to repose in his own county, rather than in his cathedral church of Ely. According to the Stanley poem:

He did end his lyfe in merrie Manchester
And ryght honourably lyeth he buried there
In his Chappell, which he began of freestone;
Syr John Stanley built it owt when he was gone,
God send his Sowle to the heavenly companye.
Farewell, godlye James, Bysshop of Elye.

With all his failings, for only family partiality could call him "godlye James," we do gather a friendly feeling for the warlike bishop, particularly when we look at the fine stalls, hardly to be matched in England, and the chief pride and glory of the present cathedral.

THE CHOIR STALLS. There are thirty stalls altogether, twelve on each side, and three returns at the western end, making a set which ranks with those of Beverley and Lincoln. For richness of detail they are unsurpassed, and after even a hasty survey of them

any one thing deserving to be remembered"; but in spite of this, there is no doubt that he did much for the collegiate church of Manchester.



THE LATHOM LEGEND

Carved on the Dean's stall in Manchester Cathedral. It shows the story of the carrying to its nest by an eagle of the infant who was rescued and became Sir Thomas Lathom of Lathom.

one will agree with the Rev. H. A. Hudson, who writes in his careful study of the "Stallwork of Manchester Cathedral,"¹ that "none will gainsay the masterful skill which could devise such labyrinths of ornamental detail; nor can admiration be withheld from the craftsmen whose constructional talents so victoriously surmounted the difficulties which confronted them, that their work has withstood for centuries the ceaseless attacks of time, and the scarcely less injurious effects of disdain and neglect."

The main design of the stalls consists of panelled backs, surmounted by two richly carved canopies, one above the other, and finished at the top with a cornice or tester. The lower canopies (or tabernacles) are far richer than the upper ones which depend for their beauty on the simplicity of upright lines, whereas the lower canopies are intricate with the fullness of the carver's art. The vaulting under these rich canopies can seldom be seen to great advantage, but they too are consummately beautiful in their treatment.

The stalls on the south side were built by the generosity of Warden Stanley, and a certain Mr. Richard Beswicke, or Bexwyk, was responsible for those on the north. On one of the stalls on the north side there is a shield divided per pale, the dexter (or right) side being divided per fesse, displaying above, the letters "r b" between a merchant's mark, and below, a chevron between seven cloves. On the sinister (or left) side there is, in heraldic designation, a "demi-virgin couped, vested and wearing a circlet." The letters "r b" are considered to be those of Richard

¹ *Trans. of Lancashire and Cheshire Ant. Society*, vol. 35.

Bexwyk; the cloves to represent the Grocers' Company; and the "demi-virgin" to indicate the Mercers' Company, but as far as can be ascertained no such name as Richard Beswicke occurs in the registers of either of the companies. There has been considerable uncertainty about this Richard Beswicke, but it seems clear from the records of the pleadings in the Duchy Court of Lancaster of the reign of Henry VIII. that "Richard Beswicke was an especial benefactor of the College, having given a suit of vestments, price £45 and more, and having built at his own charge a chapel and one side of the 'Queer' of the said College Church, which cost him 300 or 400 marks or more, besides other good deeds." We learn this fact through the dispute which arose between George West, the warden in 1518, and the Abbot of Whalley, over a certain debt of £500. The Beswicke family was a public-spirited one, for Isabel Beswicke endowed a public fountain for the market-place in 1506; and the benefactor who achieved the privilege of free fishing in the river was also a Beswicke.

No visitor fails to be shown the carving on the dean's stall, which depicts the famous Lathom legend. One sees three trees, on the topmost branches of which is an eagle's nest, where the king of birds has just laid an infant wrapped in a long robe which hangs down between the foliage. Below are some countrymen, carrying tools as they go on their way to work. Apparently they observe something unusual, and so one is seen knocking at the castle gate. This illustrates the story of the carrying off, as an infant, of Sir Thomas Lathom of Lathom by an eagle, and of his subsequent



An African Elephant



Bear-baiting



A fox stealing a goose

EXAMPLES OF THE MISERICORDS OR MISERERES IN THE
CHOIR STALLS OF MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL

rescue unharmed after his awesome experience. Sir Thomas Lathom's daughter and heiress married into the Stanley family, bringing the Lathom arms with her, and it was to this family that the warden belonged who put up the stalls and enriched them with his arms, and the traditional legend.

The carved hand-rests should be noticed, and the misericords are excellent examples of their kind, with the usual grotesque and humorous subjects. There is the fox stealing poultry while the farmer's wife, her child at her side, stands at the door of the thatched farm; a pig is shown reading a book, and also acting as a schoolmaster teaching some cubs. Another shows an African elephant carrying a formidable castle on its back; unlike that at Ripon it has no defenders.

Before leaving the choir to see the chapels, which mercifully were not swept away by the iconoclastic zeal which removed the chapels of the nave, one should see the brass of John Huntingdon, the first warden of the collegiate church, who died in 1458. He was buried in the vault below, but the brass has now been removed and placed by the sanctuary rails, so that it can be seen. It is in good preservation, and shows the warden in his mass vestments with an inscription, "*Domine dilex: decorem domus tue*" (O Lord, delight in the beauty of Thine house); which reminds us that he was the first of the known builders of the church, rebuilding the choir in the Perpendicular style.

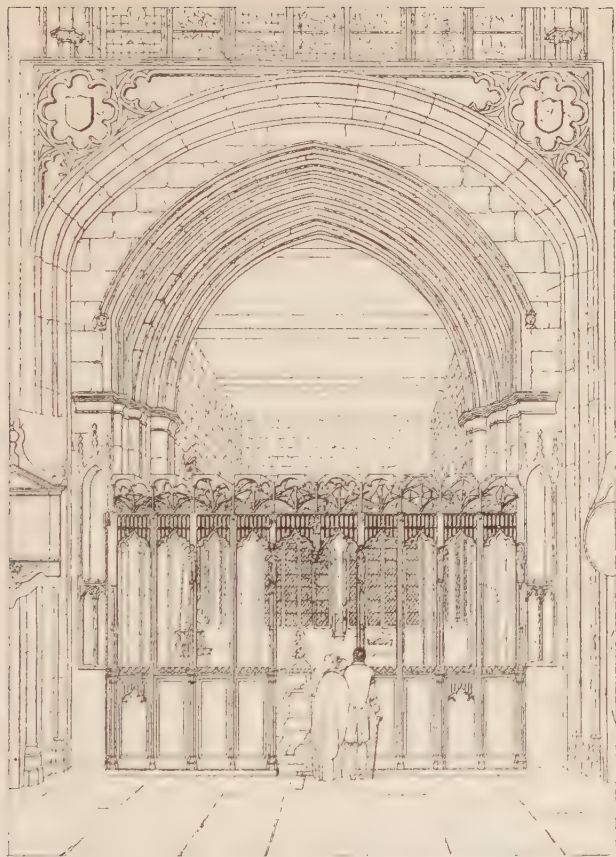
THE CHOIR CHAPELS. The first chapel on the south side of the choir is the Jesus Chapel, separated from the aisle by a good xvth-century screen. It was erected in 1506 by the Richard Beswicke who had put up the

stalls of the choir which bear his cipher. This chapel is now used as the consistory court, and in it is to be seen the carved stone (found during the restoration in 1871) which is thought to be part of the Saxon church. A door from the Jesus Chapel leads into the octagonal chapter-house, which has its main entrance from the choir aisle. The first chapter-house seems to have been quadrangular, built by Warden Huntingdon, but his work was soon replaced by that of Warden James Stanley, afterwards Bishop of Ely.

Next to the chapter-house comes the Fraser Chapel, a modern building put up in memory of Dr. James Fraser, the second Bishop of Manchester, who was much loved by all classes of people in Manchester. He was buried at Ufton Nervet in Berkshire, where he had formerly been rector, but the chapel contains a cenotaph with a recumbent statue.

At the extreme east end of the cathedral is the small Lady Chapel, the oldest part of the existing building, the archway being said to belong to the Decorated church. Warden Huntingdon rebuilt the Lady Chapel, and introduced his rebus on the spandrels of the western arch. It is sometimes stated that the chapel was again rebuilt in 1518 by the then warden, George West, but competent authorities seem to think there is no evidence for this, and as the warden himself is accused of letting the church fall into decay while he used the revenues for his personal gratification, it seems unlikely that he expended any money on rebuilding.

THE LADY CHAPEL. A good screen fills in the western arch of the Lady Chapel, which has been known as the



THE LADY CHAPEL OF MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL

As it appeared in 1830, before the wooden screen was restored. Humphrey Chetham, the founder of the hospital, is buried in the chapel, and on that account it was at one time called the Chetham Chapel.

Chetham Chapel, from the memorials to the family which is so famous in Manchester. Humphrey Chetham himself lies buried there, the man whom so many generations of schoolboys have had to thank for his generosity in founding the hospital for the education of a hundred boys. A statue of the founder, by the sculptor Theed, stands near the Lady Chapel, and shows a man in the dress of the early xviiith century, with short pointed beard, wearing a ruff and a long cloak which almost covers the doublet and hose. Every year, on Founder's Day, the boys from Chetham's Hospital march to the cathedral, carrying flowers which are deposited around the statue in memory of their kind benefactor.

THE DERBY CHAPEL. The largest chapel in the cathedral is the Derby Chapel, which lies on the north side, and is the same length as the choir. It was built in 1513 by the warden who did so much for the cathedral—James Stanley, afterwards Bishop of Ely—and was dedicated to St. John the Baptist. The chapel was used as a private chantry by the Stanley family, and was maintained by them till it was handed over in the xviiith century to the Church authorities on condition that the Earl of Derby and his family should no longer be responsible for keeping it in good order. From an old manuscript one learns that there used to be an inscription over the doorway from the aisle into the chapel, engraved in Latin, which the writer has translated into English: "We beseech you that you assist us, James Stanley, Bishop of Ely, John Stanley, Knt., and Margaret his wife, and their parents, with your prayers to y^e Lord Jesus Christ, who have built

this chapel in His name and in honour of St. Jn^o Baptist, in the year of his incarnation 1513."

Leading out of this chapel is the small Ely Chapel, containing the tomb of the Bishop of Ely placed against the screen separating the chantry from the Derby Chapel. The altar tomb bears the upper part of a brass effigy, showing the episcopal vestments, but the lower part has been torn off; the inscription, however, still remains. The chapel and chantry were erected not many years before all chantries were swept away at the Reformation, and in thinking over the bishop's record as we stand by his tomb, we can understand some of the causes which brought about that great movement. Though undoubtedly a man of great capacity, the Bishop of Ely had brought discredit upon the Church to which he belonged by the scandal of his private life, though it is said he had received absolution, and perhaps the building of the chapel shows his penitence.

Anyhow his tomb remained undisturbed, and the beautiful church at Manchester which he had done so much to beautify and enrich, continued, with the exception of the brief interlude during the reign of Edward VI., and again during the Commonwealth, to officiate as a college till in 1847 the last warden, Dr. William Herbert, became the first dean of the cathedral church of the diocese of Manchester.



THE WEST SIDE OF THE CLOISTER OF CHETHAM'S HOSPITAL, MANCHESTER
It belongs to the Perpendicular period, and was part of the college founded in
the xvth century by Lord Thomas de la Warre.

CHAPTER V

CHETHAM'S HOSPITAL, MANCHESTER

CHAPTER V

CHETHAM'S HOSPITAL, MANCHESTER

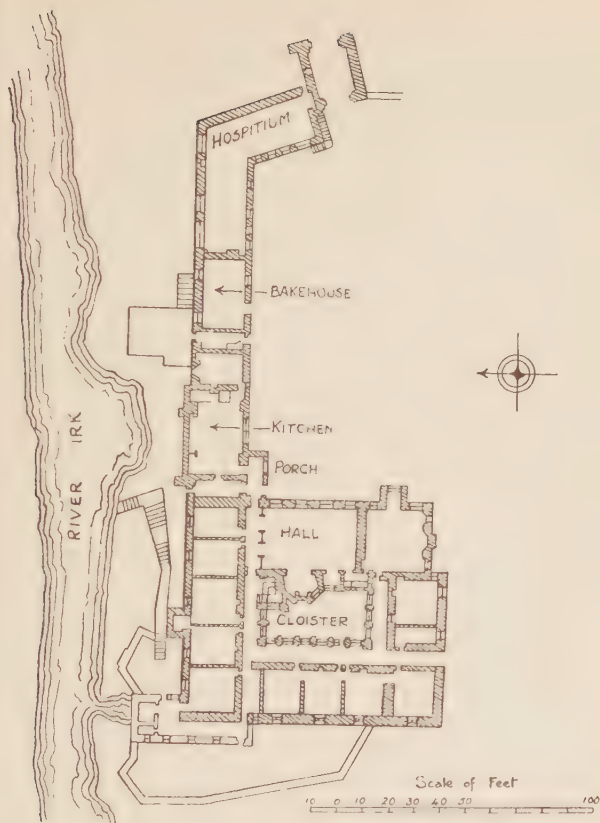
Standing just north of the cathedral, and so intimately associated with its history that it is impossible not to include some account of it when dealing with the cathedral, is Chetham's Hospital. Amid the tall buildings of the city it is easy to overlook the inconspicuous low block of buildings, only two storeys high, which once stood out in picturesque harmony with the collegiate church alongside.

It is almost impossible to conjure up the days when Manchester was a townlet in wooded surroundings, built on a plateau above the streams of Irk and Irwell, and the tall tower of the church looked over smiling country. Now the rivers are hidden from sight, the trees have vanished, and the red stone of church and hospital is blackened to the general tone of the modern industrial city. But when the barons of Manchester held sway, they built their hall on the site of these buildings, for the plateau was a strong defensive position, holding in early days the whole of the dwellings of the town. It is known that the Grelleys had their hall there when the Early English church was occupying the site of the present cathedral, but

of this ancient barons' dwelling nothing now remains. When the last Grelley, who had given a charter to the town by which it was ruled for many centuries, died in 1313 the property went to the De la Warres, and the last of this family, who had become rector of the church, handed over his hall to be used as the home of the warden and clergy of the new college which he had just founded. It is not known whether Thomas de la Warre pulled down the existing baronial buildings, but it is evident that no part of the present hospital is older than 1422, when the church was made collegiate, and it is said that he spent £3000 upon the new buildings to fit them for the new inmates.

The college was built in the form of a square block of buildings round a cloistered courtyard, with a long arm which at one time fronted the river Irk. Though the picturesque charm which must have existed when the low cluster of dignified dwelling-houses stood adjacent to the beautiful Perpendicular church of the xvth century has vanished, one cannot fail to be grateful that this relic of the past remains almost as it was five centuries ago. In its forward movement Manchester has swept away nearly all sign of its ancient history, the cathedral and Chetham's Hospital being the sole survivors of any importance.

The wardens occupied the college buildings from 1422 to 1549, when the college was dissolved and the Stanley family came into possession, but it was refounded by Queen Mary, and the college was again used by the clergy till 1646, when the Commonwealth stepped in and dispersed the warden and fellows. The buildings were let out to various occupiers, and in



GROUND-PLAN OF CHETHAM'S HOSPITAL, MANCHESTER

The buildings were, before the Dissolution in 1549, those of the collegiate church.



THE HALL OF CHETHAM'S HOSPITAL, MANCHESTER

The ingle-nook now contains a fireplace, but the original method of heating the hall appears to have been a brazier placed in a central position, the smoke

consequence fell into disrepair, a survey of the property giving an account of the different users:

Ye large building called ye College in Manchester, consisting of many rooms, with two barnes, one gate house, verie much decay'd, one parcell of ground formerly an orchard, and one garden, now in ye possession of Joseph Werden gent., who pays for ye same, for ye use of the Common wealth, ten pounds yearly. There is likewise one other room in ye said College reserved and made use of for publike meetings of X'sian conscientious people.

At this time appears Humphrey Chetham, whose name is remembered with gratitude in Manchester for his munificence in founding the school for poor boys, and the free library which he established. Chetham was a Manchester man, his family name being derived from a township just north of the city, in which he himself spent his life. He was born in 1580, his father being a prosperous tradesman, described as "of Crumpsall Hall, gent.," but the estate and house were quite small. As a boy Humphrey walked two miles from his home, through the pleasant lanes, to the Grammar School at Manchester, wearing the long coat with its strap belt familiar to us from the dress of the Bluecoat boys of Christ's Hospital. At seventeen he was apprenticed to Mr. Samuel Tipping, linen-draper of Manchester, who supplied him with "honest meat and drynke, clothe and lodgyng, hossen, shoes, lynen and woollen, meet and convenient for his estate and degree," and upon the feast day of St. Michael the Archangel fourpence for his wages. By the time his apprenticeship was over his father had died, and Humphrey shortly afterwards

entered into partnership with his brother George, a grocer in London. Humphrey became a dealer in all kinds of cloth, "fustians, Black Flanders Serge, Black Turkey Grogram," and many kinds of linen and cotton goods. He employed men to make these cloths which he sold retail in Manchester, and sent large quantities to London for his brother to sell. By means of thrifty care and persevering labour, both brothers became wealthy men, and we find Humphrey buying property, refusing the offer of a knighthood, and being made the high sheriff of the county palatine.

Chetham was getting an old man when the college buildings were no longer used for the clergy, but he was apparently struck by their appropriateness for his benevolent scheme of founding a school and library. He entered into negotiations for purchasing the buildings, but nothing had been definitely settled when he died, at the age of seventy-three, on September 20th, 1653. In his will he left money to buy land to endow his proposed school for forty poor boys from Manchester and the neighbourhood; also money to buy or build a house for the boys, "the college to be bought if it may be had"; and £1000 for books to be bought for a public library in Manchester. His trustees succeeded in carrying out his wishes, and in 1658 the school was dedicated, being known by the name of Mr. Chetham's Hospital, which it has retained to this day. The boys still wear the dress which the founder had himself worn when a schoolboy, with the long-skirted coat, knee-breeches, stockings and buckled shoes. There are a hundred boys in the school now, all of whom receive free board and education,

which is of a sound elementary character, together with technical and manual work.

The main interest in the old buildings is found in the great hall, which is forty-three feet long, cut off from the corridor by screens of simple design, contemporary with the hall. On one side of the hall there is a large fireplace in a deeply recessed ingle-nook, lighted by small windows looking into the quadrangle. Apparently there was at one time a wide archway into this recess, but it was afterwards filled up, a huge stone lintel placed across the opening and the roof inside vaulted. Next to the ingle-nook is a bay window, adjoining the doorway which leads to a staircase and the warden's room.

This room, once occupied by the famous building wardens, Huntingdon, Langley and James Stanley, by Laurence Vaux, the last of the Roman Catholic wardens, and Dr. Dee, celebrated more as an alchemist than a cleric, is now used as the reading-room of the library. It is a beautiful piece of work, wainscoted up to the spring of the timbered ceiling, and richly carved on the north (or fireplace) side. The furniture is all of the same period, so that on stepping from the busy street into the dignified and quiet repose of this room, one is carried back to the xvth century, and able to handle the books which were actually in use at that time. The money left by Chetham was sufficient to start the first free library in England, which has since been increased by many donations. There are some fine examples of Caxton's printing, and a copy of the work of Matthew Paris, the famous monk of St. Albans, is among the particularly rare books. The

old dormitory, which now houses many of the volumes, is a fine room with a timber roof, and contains a window with some old glass representing St. Martin of Tours.

Humphrey Chetham was at one time accused of making his fortune by hard usury, an accusation inspired probably by jealousy at his prosperity, but he came triumphantly through this trial, and has every right to be thought well of by his fellow countrymen, and particularly by the citizens of Manchester whom he enriched by his wealth, acquired by a life of honest industry. No one should leave Manchester, for whatever reason he may have visited the city, without paying a visit to Chetham's Hospital, which is a fine memorial of one of the early traders who helped to build up the reputation for honest business which is the keystone of England's prosperity.



THE LIBRARY OF CHETHAM'S HOSPITAL, MANCHESTER
It was formerly the college dormitory, and is now subdivided
into recesses between the bays formed by bookshelves.

CHAPTER VI

LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL

CHAPTER VI

LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL

As a diocese Liverpool is one of the youngest in England, but its cathedral, now in process of building, will soon rival successfully all the other cathedrals of the country in beauty of detail and general structure. From the xvth century up till 1880 Liverpool had been under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Chester, and previous to that time the Bishop of Lichfield had held sway. But the city which had grown so immensely during the past century was felt to require a diocese of its own, and thus the question of a cathedral became imminent, for there was no parish church of sufficient size and dignity to be justified in adapting it for cathedral usages.

After a preliminary attempt in 1885 which proved abortive, a scheme was set on foot in 1901 for the building of a great cathedral. Dr. Chavasse, who had become the second bishop, succeeded in getting together a strong committee, with Lord Derby as the chairman, to consider the possibility of so vast a scheme as the building of a new cathedral. The idea this time was taken up enthusiastically, and nearly £150,000 was promised at once, making it possible

to proceed to draw out the plans. It was felt that in a city so important as Liverpool, where there are so many splendid buildings erected for commercial and governmental purposes, the cathedral should in no way compare unfavourably, but must in beauty and dignity witness to the importance of the Church in the life of the city.

An immense effort was necessary to meet the requirements, and at first it was feared that money



THE ARMS OF THE
SEE OF LIVERPOOL

would be drained from more pressing needs, but it has been found that giving has been stimulated and not reduced. It was determined to build each part as the money came in and to finish that part completely, not building the whole main structure, as was done in the case of Westminster Cathedral, and then proceeding to enrich the interior with later gifts. Everyone has contributed to the cathedral, rich and

poor alike, and the vast sum of one million pounds has already been collected, while another million will probably be required before the whole building is finished. There seems to be no fear that this money will fail to come in, for the cathedral in the majesty of its design has so appealed to the imagination, that all are anxious for it to be completed, when in size alone it will outstrip all competitors in England, and will be only second to St. Peter's at Rome in the world.

The site which was selected was a very suitably-placed piece of high ground overlooking the river,



THE SILHOUETTE OF LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL

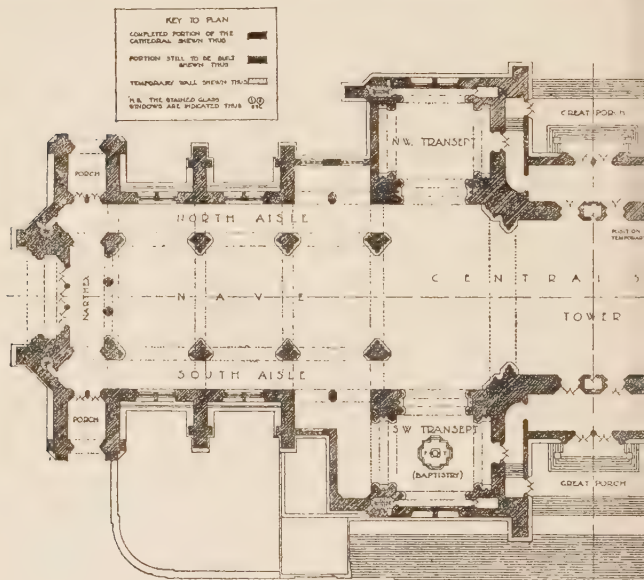
As it appears to-day from the north-west, showing the Choir and Lady Chapel.

known as St. James's Mount, which has caused some differences in level, proving very effective from an architectural point of view. After the site came the choice of an architect whose work was to be selected on the basis of the most original conception, "for that power combined with beauty that makes a great and noble building." The choice fell upon Mr. (now Sir) Giles Gilbert Scott, grandson of Sir Gilbert Scott, who was then only twenty-one years of age. He had drawn up a Gothic design, of no strict period, being no mere slavish copy of the past, thoroughly modern and fresh in treatment and yet at the same time full of dignity and restraint. In fulfilling the stipulation of Dr. Chavasse that the whole cathedral should be large enough for a congregation of possibly three thousand people, it was found that this had, as it were, set the scale for the whole building, which proved to be far larger than was at first anticipated.

At the present day less than half of the cathedral, as it is designed, has been completed, but enough has been built to show the majestic simplicity of the building which will one day be the chief glory of Liverpool. The whole of the east end is finished, including the Lady Chapel, chapter-house, choir, and two of the four projected transepts. The remaining parts to be built include the tower—which is not to be erected at either of the transept crossings, the usual position in mediæval churches, but over the space between them—the two remaining transepts and the nave. The tower will be two hundred and eighty feet in height, and will be a commanding landmark from the Mersey and across the Wirral peninsula. The

stone used is red sandstone, chiefly from local quarries, which has a pleasant soft tone.

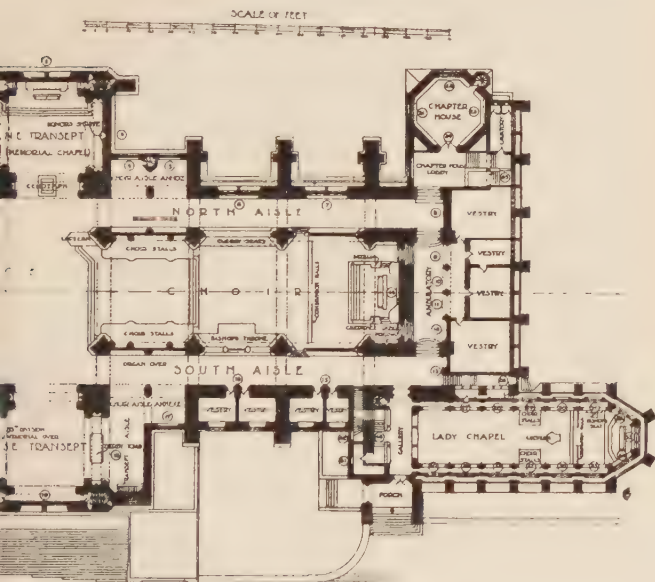
Seen to-day, without the tower and the nave, the exterior of the cathedral has a somewhat truncated



PLAN
Showing the whole building

appearance, and in the light of a misty morning the grey silhouette looming out of the haze is almost featureless. The architect has deliberately denied himself great richness of outward detail: there are no flying buttresses, and few pinnacles, the main

impression is given of simple surfaces, with the decoration coming in the form of an arcaded gallery on the outside of the choir, and the figures of saints and angels in the window mullions.



LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL

intended to be when completed.

The chief entrance to the cathedral is through a porch in the temporary west wall, from which the tower will spring. Outside the masons are still busy with stonework, and there is the general untidiness inseparable from any building operations, but once

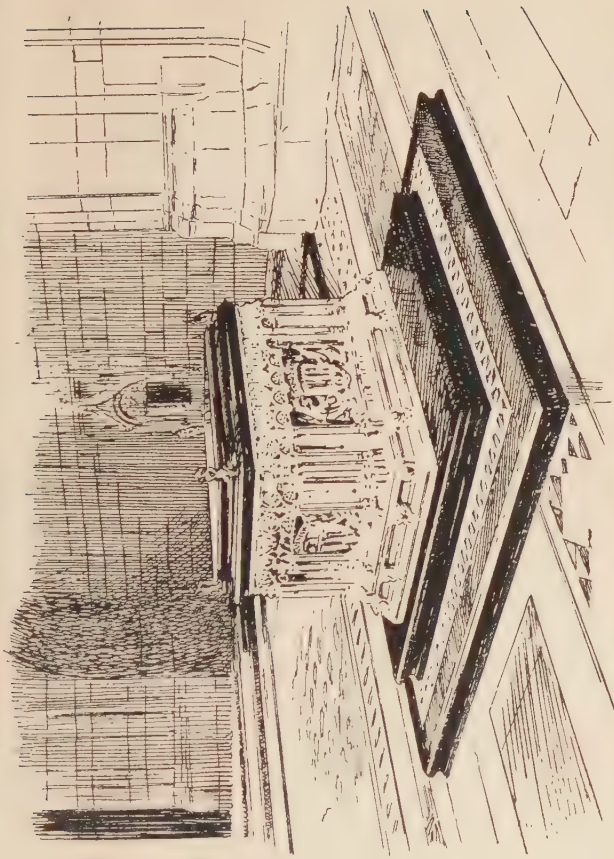
inside the cathedral, one forgets incompleteness in the utterly satisfying beauty of the splendid fragment which has been achieved. The great height of the choir and transept arches, the low tones of colour, the subordination of detail, combine to give one an impression of perfect beauty. Here in a building without a touch of the romance of the past, with no glamour of the distant ages, through whose aisles no historic figure has passed, either to triumph or to martyrdom, there is conveyed so strong a feeling of reverence that one instinctively pauses on entering. The architect has succeeded not only in building a fine structure, but in the more difficult task of imbuing it with a deep sense of reverent beauty, so that it achieves the high purpose of bringing man in touch with the Infinite.

In one of his essays Emerson, who had been much impressed with the beauty of the many mediæval cathedrals and abbeys which he had visited in England, wrote of the power of the religious sentiment which had created this glorious religious architecture, such as is visualised in York, Westminster Abbey, Ripon and elsewhere, and adds regretfully, "works to which the key is lost with the sentiment which created them." If the American philosopher had been able to visit Liverpool to-day, he would recall that statement, for after seeing the cathedral rising on St. James's Mount, one can say with the utmost confidence that the key, which was lost, is found at last, and that nothing which Englishmen saw building in the great cathedral building age is finer in workmanship or conception than that in Liverpool at the present time. The passing fancy that has sometimes pursued one, to find a means



LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL AS IT IS TO APPEAR WHEN COMPLETED

The architect is Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, R.A.



THE CENOTAPH IN THE WAR MEMORIAL TRANSEPT OF LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL



Stewart Bale.

THE CHOIR OF LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL

The organ is in two parts and appears on either side. In the design of the east window Sir Giles Gilbert Scott has produced a curious tree-like effect by the massive subdivision in the centre.

by which to turn back the wheels of time and be again in the Middle Ages—in those days of almost universal artistry (if, alas, also of great pestilence and scourge), when the splendid religious houses were being built by men who were all actuated by the same understanding of beauty—can almost be realised to-day; for the great building era is not over, it is reborn in Liverpool.

THE CHOIR

It is almost with difficulty that one begins to break away from the general vision of the cathedral, and to study the different parts and the methods by which a modern architect has dealt with some of the problems which confronted his predecessors in the past centuries. We find that the choir itself has no clerestory windows, only an arcade and triforium, for the east window is so large that it gives enough light, and there are large windows in the aisles.

THE ORGAN, that great obstruction in many cathedrals, is in Liverpool built into the structure, above the choir stalls, the case being of the same rich woodwork as the stalls. When completed it will be the largest in England, and capable of carrying out all that any organist can desire. When standing in the choir one cannot fail to be impressed by the clever use of colour—the soft rose tint of the stone, the marble design on the floor, on which the arms of the diocese have been laid in coloured marble, the gleam of gold on the carved stone reredos, the special colours of the aisle windows which, as the sun journeys across the heavens,

splash gold, sapphire, ruby or emerald on the marble pavement. Each of the four aisle windows has a specialised colour, and is dedicated to one of the four evangelists, St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke and St. John, whose sculptured figures under carved canopies are placed high up, so that they are difficult to see unless illumined by particular light.

THE CHOIR STALLS are beautifully carved in plain oak, the backs being adorned with fluted shields, surmounted by a crown most exquisitely cut. These stalls are the gift of a single donor, who has paid for two sets, the first being accidentally destroyed by fire in the workshop before they reached the cathedral. The bishop's throne, like the organ and other features, is part of the building, and cannot be removed, as in many other cathedrals. The back part is of stone, the throne itself with the desk in front being of the same plain silver-grey oak as the choir stalls. Above the throne the arms of the diocese are carved, while the desk carries the arms of the see, impaling those of Dr. Chavasse, the bishop who was largely responsible for the founding of the cathedral.

THE REREDOS, carrying out Sir Giles Gilbert Scott's general treatment, is part of the east wall, and does not exist as a separate feature in itself. In consequence it is built of the same pink sandstone as the ordinary walls, the sculpture being partly gilded, in order that the carved panels and figures might stand out, as at first they were scarcely noticeable. The panels are descriptive of events in the life of our Lord.

THE EAST WINDOW is the largest in England, though at Gloucester the area of glass is actually greater. It

pictures the *Te Deum*, with Christ surrounded by angels and cherubim, while below are the apostles, prophets, and martyrs throughout the ages.

The question of lighting demanded much consideration, and it was finally decided against uncovered lights, reflector lights being used in the choir, while great bronze pendants, of beautiful design, illumine the transepts and aisles.

THE NORTH-EAST TRANSEPT has been designed as a permanent War Memorial to all the sons of Liverpool who lost their lives in the Great War, and a cenotaph of white and black marble stands under the entrance arch. The sides of this memorial are adorned with shields and canopied figures, while the top is made to contain the Roll of Honour, the glass which protects it being fitted into a bronze framework. At each of the corners is a figure representing the four different arms of the fighting forces, sailor, soldier, airman and marine. There are about forty thousand names on the roll, which includes every man killed in the Liverpool Regiment, and also every Liverpool man who was fighting in other regiments.

In the SOUTH-EAST TRANSEPT there is a memorial to the 55th (West Lancashire) Division. It forms part of a gallery above an archway on the western wall, and depicts a winged angel holding a crown above a kneeling soldier. The motto of the division is cut underneath: "They win or die who wear the Rose of Lancaster."

THE CHOIR AISLES are wonderfully impressive in their simplicity, the outer walls being plain and almost unbroken. From the exterior no idea of aisles is given,



STATUE OF ST. JOHN ON
THE EXTERIOR OF THE
EMERALD WINDOW OF
LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL

so that the outward construction causes the aisles to cut through the massive piers which maintain the strain of the choir vault. Each of these archways carries a gallery, which the architect has used to bear the enrichment denied to the walls. Carved angels act as corbels, the open balustrade is highly enriched, and there are shields emblematic of the windows above them.

The south aisle leads to the LADY CHAPEL, which is not placed at the extreme east, but stands at a lower level at the south-east of the main building. To place it behind the altar would, it was considered, break into the beauty of and somewhat block the east window. It was the first part of the cathedral to be built, being completed and consecrated in 1910, ten years after the scheme of the new cathedral had been first broached. Though nearly the same size as an ordinary parish church, the Lady Chapel is regarded as a whole with no distinction



Stewart Bale.

THE LADY CHAPEL, LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL

It is placed at a much lower level than the main portions of the Cathedral, and is not in line with the nave, as is usually the case in mediæval churches.

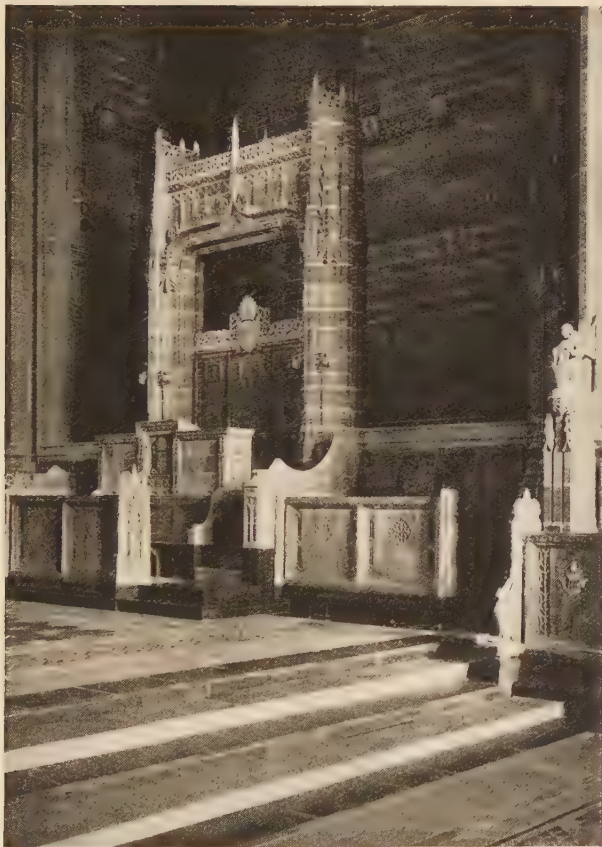
between nave and choir. It is a very beautiful building, treated somewhat differently to the rest of the cathedral. There is no true triforium, though the open stone screen above the aisles rather suggests it. All the windows are dedicated to the Deeds of Good Women, from St. Frideswide, the patroness of Oxford, and Queen Margaret of Scotland, to Queen Victoria and all noble queens, and to Grace Darling and all courageous maidens. In the apsidal east end the altar bears a wooden triptych, mainly blue-green in colour.

An ambulatory behind the altar connects the choir aisles, and gives access to the Lady Chapel on the south-east and the chapter-house on the north-east. The chapter-house is small, befitting a modern cathedral chapter, which is no longer the large body it was in mediæval days, when such huge structures as those of York and Lincoln were erected. This octagonal building is the gift of the Freemasons of West Lancashire, in memory of the first Earl of Lathom.

It is interesting to know that the system of heating, after a great deal of consideration, has been arranged on the Roman hypocaust system of applying heat beneath the floors, examples of which method can be seen at nearly all the more important Roman sites in England. The air, warmed by stoves, will be electrically driven through the double floor space, so that the whole paving of the cathedral will become a radiator, although it will not actually feel warm to the feet. The heat is said to be evenly distributed and draughts will be prevented.

The question which occurs to every visitor to the

new cathedral is—When will it be finished? The part which is now existing took twenty years to build, but it was sorely hindered during that period by over four years of war, when very little could be done. It is thought probable that the great central space and the two western transepts can be built in the next six or seven years, and if the necessary financial means were provided the nave and the tower could be finished in another seven years. In that case A.D. 1940 should see the cathedral finished in all its simplicity of outline and perfection of detail.



Stewart Bale.

THE BISHOP'S THRONE IN LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL

It is of stone, and has been treated as a structural part of the building.

CHAPTER VII

HAUGHMOND ABBEY—WENLOCK PRIORY—
SHREWSBURY ABBEY—BUILDWAS ABBEY
—LILLESHALL ABBEY—THE ABBEY OF
VALLE CRUCIS—BASINGWERK ABBEY

CHAPTER VII

HAUGHMOND ABBEY—WENLOCK PRIORY—SHREWSBURY
ABBAY—BUILDWAS ABBAY—LILLESHELL ABBAY—
THE ABBAY OF VALLE CRUCIS—BASINGWERK ABBAY

HAUGHMOND ABBAY

Three miles to the north of Shrewsbury stands Haughmond Hill, under whose wooded height stand the ruins of Haughmond Abbey, in a most beautiful position, looking towards Shrewsbury's many spires.

The name means the "high mount" (*haut mont*), and the hill itself is traditionally associated with Archibald, Earl of Douglas, who is said to have been captured there after the Battle of Shrewsbury in 1403. Douglas, who was fighting with Harry Percy, the Hotspur of history, against Henry IV., was known as one of the most gallant warriors of the day. "That sprightly Scot of Scots, Douglas, that runs o' horseback up a hill perpendicular," said Falstaff, adding, "That rascal hath good mettle in him; he will not run." But run he did after the great battle, in which 2300 gentlemen and 6000 soldiers were slain, and a spot is still pointed out on the hill-side where his horse leapt a great crag, being known as the "Douglas Leap." Henry IV. showed him clemency, though

he had caused three of the chief prisoners to be beheaded on the day after the battle, and gave him his liberty—

His valour shown upon our crests to-day
Hath taught us how to cherish such high deeds,
Even in the bosom of our adversaries.

We do not know what the Augustinian canons of the abbey beneath the “busky hill” were doing on that July day when so many knights and men-at-arms were slain; whether they heard anything of the fierce fight, or saw the reckless Douglas charging up the hill, for history is silent, and with the Dissolution vanished not only the black-robed canons, but much of the story of their house.

It was founded about 1130 by William FitzAlan of Clun as a house for the regular canons of St. Augustine, and it became an abbey in 1155. FitzAlan had supported Queen Maud, and in consequence was banished by King Stephen, but returned again to power with Henry II., who, to please his staunch supporter, showed favour to the canons of Haughmond. The house seems to have had a prosperous career until the Dissolution. The Pope, Alexander III., had even given them the great privilege of continuing the divine office when there should be a general interdict, if they recited it in a low voice behind closed doors. These Augustinian canons differed from the general order of monks, being all ordained clergy, able to minister in a parish, and they did not keep themselves entirely shut off from the outside world. They wore a linen rochet, black cope, and round-toed boots, and



THE NAVE OF THE ABBEY CHURCH OF BUILDWAS NEAR SHREWSBURY
The monastery was one of the first of the Cistercian Order to be established in England. It was founded in 1135, soon after Fountains in Yorkshire.

at first stood halfway between the monks and the secular canons, but after a while more and more resembled the monkish orders, carrying out the same kind of life, speaking Latin, studying in the carols of the cloisters, sleeping in the dormitory where a light burned all night and strict silence was imposed, and eating their meals in the refectory.

Discipline at times became slack, and we find that in 1329 Bishop Roger of Lichfield, who had episcopal jurisdiction over these Augustinian houses, found it necessary to insist that rules should be kept, and silence observed in the proper hours, and he also ordered the removal not only of the hounds which had been kept for hunting, but also of two women named Alice and Agnes Goodwyn, who had been living in the outer precincts.

The abbey at one time covered a great area, but of the great cruciform church very little is left, the position of the high altar only being located by the finding of two tombs of the FitzAlan family, one of them being to John FitzAlan, who died in 1270, the great-grandson of the founder.

Of the conventual buildings the chapter-house is the most complete. It possesses a fine Norman west front, of the Transitional period, having a rich central doorway with a deeply-recessed arch on either side which at one time were glazed. Between the columns adorning these arches are sculptured figures, representing St. John the Evangelist, St. Catherine, St. Margaret, St. Michael, and various bishops. The flat oak ceiling may have been replaced since the Dissolution. The refectory has an arched doorway, and both

it and the great hall of the guest-house belong to the Decorated period. The monks' well is to be seen behind the chapter-house.

WENLOCK PRIORY

A religious house has stood upon the site of Wenlock Priory since the viiith century, when Merewald, the father of St. Milburga, founded the nunnery of which his daughter became the abbess. Among the many legends concerning the saintly abbess, one finds the story of the immunity of her fields from the depredations of the wild fowl which were a nuisance to those of her neighbours; and how she was able, when pursued by an undesired lover, to turn into a raging torrent a tiny stream which she had just jumped, thus preventing all further pursuit. She died in the nunnery, but all trace of her burial-place was lost for some centuries, owing to the destruction of the house by the Danes in 896. It was restored by Earl Leofric and the Lady Godiva, who founded or re-established so many religious houses, and to whom Coventry, Leominster, St. Werburgh's at Chester owed so much. But by the time of the Conquest the nunnery seems to have been deserted, and there were therefore no English nuns to remove when Roger de Montgomery founded a Cluniac priory in 1080.

Roger de Montgomery was one of the greatest of the Norman barons, being given the Earldom of Shrewsbury, which included nearly all Shropshire. Like his neighbour, Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester,

he ruled a palatinate with almost regal powers, but he used these powers justly, and shortly before he died he entered the Abbey of Shrewsbury as a monk, and there he was buried.

Wenlock Priory is sometimes called an abbey, but it was really never more than a priory, being a dependent branch of a mother church in a foreign country. The Cluniacs had over thirty houses in England, but they were not abbeys, and were all obliged to make certain payments to their superiors in France. They have been described as the ritualists of monasticism, loving a splendid church, enriched with statues and coloured glass, and delighting in a ceremonial service with all the embellishments of lighted candles and jewels, banners and incense. It was this splendour, this perhaps too ostentatious ceremonialism, which called down the displeasure of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, whose austerity objected to anything but the simplest form of worship.

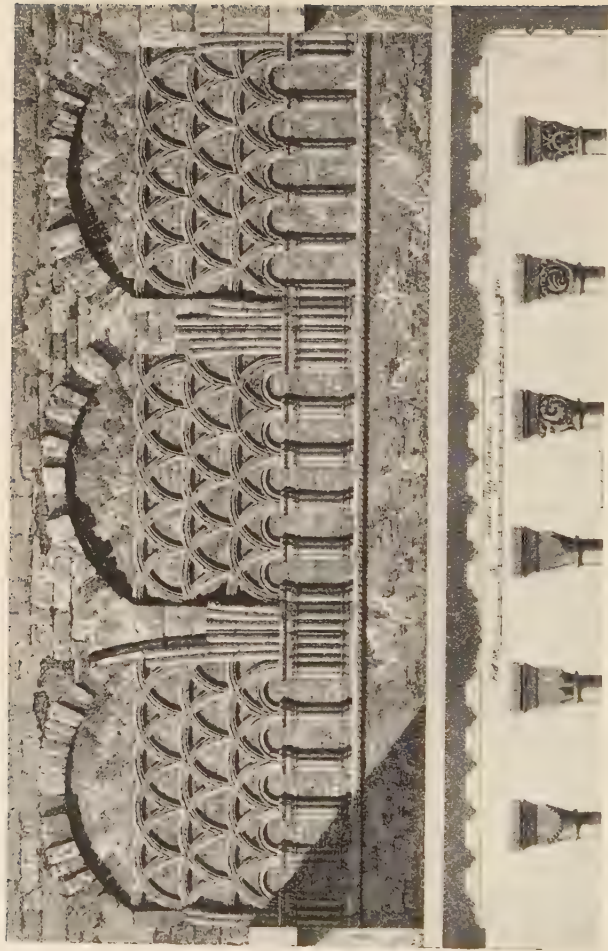
The priory church was dedicated to St. Milburga, whose memory was still cherished though her resting-place was unknown. It was greatly desired by the monastery that the site should be found. William of Malmesbury writes of the fortunate accident by which the discovery was made. A boy, it appears, in running over a certain part of the floor, chanced to cause the breaking of a stone beneath which was found the much-desired tomb. In it lay the body of the saint, sound and uncorrupt, and giving out a sweet smell of balsam. The remains were then conveyed to the front of the high altar, where a shrine was erected, before which many miracles were performed; "none came to

return without the cure or mitigation of his malady, and even king's evil departed before the merits of the virgin."

The priory grew in importance, until it became the chief of the Cluniac houses in England, and when Walter FitzAlan founded a priory in Paisley, he asked for monks from Wenlock, so that the Scottish priory became a cell of that in Shropshire.

Henry III. stayed at Wenlock, which had by that time become an imposing monastery, and perhaps the wealthiest in Shropshire. But if by 1291 it was richer than the Norman abbey of Shrewsbury, thirteen miles away, in less than a century the priory fell under royal displeasure during the French wars of Edward III. It was forbidden to send any of its revenues to assist its mother church, and it was regarded as an alien until Richard II. naturalised it and freed it from foreign domination. At the Dissolution, so beautiful was the church that Henry VIII. intended to keep it as a cathedral, until he found that his expenses, in spite of the vast sums pouring in from the dissolved religious houses, would not permit of his putting aside property for the necessary endowment. If the original plan had been carried out, it would probably have been possible to see this beautiful priory church in all its perfection of detail, whereas to-day it is a fragmentary ruin.

The remains show the priory to have been a noble Early English structure, rather similar to that of Salisbury Cathedral, which the surviving portions of the west front resemble. It is the south side of the church which is chiefly standing, portions of the south tran-



INTERLACED TRANSITIONAL NORMAN ARCADING ON THE NORTH WALL OF THE CHAPTER-HOUSE
OF WENLOCK PRIORY

Below are examples of the capitals on a larger scale.

sept, and three bays of the south aisle. Part of the north transept also remains, and the bases of the piers of the central tower. It seems a marvel that so much still exists, when there is an xviiith-century illustration showing the brutal way in which a callous world was using the church—a waggon is standing waiting to receive the stones while a column is being deliberately thrown down—it is not surprising that many houses in the town of Much Wenlock are partially built with stone from the priory.

The chapter-house is Norman, and doubtless came into being in Roger de Montgomery's time. It is now roofless, and its eastern wall has nearly disappeared, but the north and south walls are fairly perfect and show most beautiful Norman arcading—rows of intersecting arches, springing from pilasters, all of which have carved capitals differing from one another. It is entered from the west by three large round-arched openings, above which were at one time the four windows lighting the chapter-house—but though they are shown in drawings made in the xviiith century, they have now vanished.

But the great feature of Wenlock Priory is the prior's house, now a private dwelling, which is said to be a unique example of a xvth-century domestic dwelling. It is built round two sides of a courtyard, including the infirmary of Roger de Montgomery's time and the prior's lodge. Owing to careful preservation it has remained without any drastic restoration, and so retains its original appearance, except for a few additional windows. Mr. Mackenzie Walcott describes it as "a two-storeyed building with a tall

roof and a picturesque prospect turret. It affords the most interesting example of the domestic arrangement of the house of the superior of a great religious community which we possess. It is of the latter part of the xvth century, and consists of a large western gallery one hundred feet long in two storeys over which the roof is carried down as a cover. It has open windows in trefoiled couplets, with mullions and transoms, and is buttressed; the corridors being connected by a wide newel staircase. At each end there is a chimney."

No wonder Mr. Henry James writes of such a house that "you feast upon the pictorial, you inhale the historic." He tells us too that a ghost walks, "a grey friar, who is seen in the dusky hours at the end of the passages." Doubtless it is the dimness of the light which gives the friar his "greyness," for the dress of the Cluniacs was a black woollen frock, a white woollen tunic, and a black scapular.

SHREWSBURY ABBEY

Built on a hill, fair Salop greets the eye,
While Severn forms a crescent gliding by.

So wrote Leland of Shrewsbury in the xvth century, and to-day its situation is still beautiful, surrounded on three sides by the river, while it retains within the city itself much of that spirit of mediævalism and romance. It was always considered a place of importance, both to Britons and Romans; the English fortified it with a mound and earthworks,

while the Normans regarded it as a vital position on the borders of Wales.

When Roger de Montgomery, who had rendered great services to the Conqueror at Hastings, was rewarded with the Earldom of Shrewsbury, he began a great castle commanding the isthmus in the Severn which is only three hundred yards across, and his successor started the construction of walls which afterwards girdled the city. Eastward across the river from the castle, in the low flat meadow, stood a small timber-built Saxon church. William of Malmesbury records that it was in this tiny church that the holy Wulstan, Bishop of Worcester, used to worship on his visits to Shrewsbury, declaring to the townsfolk that "however unimportant this spot appears now, there will come a time when it will be the most glorious sanctuary in all Shrewsbury, the pride of the county; the place which ye will love in life, and where ye will seek to be buried after death." His prediction was fulfilled when the great Earl Roger founded a Benedictine abbey on the spot, bringing over monks from Sées in Normandy.

The abbey was founded in 1083, the earl granting a liberal charter, in which he stated that he had charged his sons that they should love the place and hold it dear, and "if it should perchance befall that I should die in England, that they should place me there." Eleven years later he was taken ill in his castle across the river, and he begged permission to enter the monastery as a monk. Within a few days the great earl was dead, and he was honourably buried "between the two altars." Although a tomb is often pointed out

as his, no one can fix upon his grave, for all the eastern end of the church was destroyed.

His son, Hugh the Red, who gave great gifts to the abbey, was killed four years after his father's death while fighting the Norwegians at the Straits of Anglesey.

The first abbot, Fulchered, gained fame for himself by preaching a striking sermon on the misdeeds of William Rufus, in the course of which he declaimed: "The wrath of God will no longer spare the transgressors. Behold! the bow of celestial anger is bent against the reprobate; and an arrow, swift to wound, is drawn out of the quiver." It was on the very day after these prophetic words were spoken that Rufus is supposed to have met his fate in the New Forest.

The founder and his son had been generous to the abbey, for the Domesday record shows it to have been well endowed even then; but like monastic houses this one at Shrewsbury desired a special saint, at whose shrine miracles could be performed and pilgrims thereby attracted. At Wenlock Priory, also founded by Earl Roger, St. Milburga's bones had been found with great rejoicing and already pilgrims were flocking there to be healed and to leave gifts. Saints were searched for, but as they were usually regarded with the greatest veneration, it was not easy to persuade any place to give up so profitable a possession. Finally, the remains of a Saxon saint called St. Winifride were discovered, and to obtain possession of them the prior was prepared to go to extreme measures. She had been buried at Gwytherin, a remote spot in Denbighshire, and from thence it was desired to translate the remains.

The story of St. Winifride is picturesque. She was, it is stated, a noble maiden who had lived in the viith century, residing in a nunnery under the charge of her uncle, St. Beuno. She was seen one day by Prince Caradoc, who fell violently in love with her great beauty, but when she refused his proposals was so enraged that he cut off her head with his sword. The head rolled down the hill, into the church, and up to the altar where St. Beuno was officiating. A well sprang up where the head rested, the stones always retaining marks of the blood of the virgin. St. Beuno, by fervent prayer, was able to restore the head to St. Winifride, who returned to life and stayed on earth for another fifteen years. In spite of much persuasion the Welsh would not give up their virgin saint, and the chapter at Shrewsbury was faced with a serious difficulty. However, the prior, Robert Pen-nant, finally set forth to do his best, and by dint of invented visions and terrifying warnings, he induced the Welsh to yield up the much-desired bones of St. Winifride. They were carried amid great rejoicing to the abbey, and enshrined near the altar. Pilgrims were at once attracted, and the usual influx of costly gifts followed. In a stone screen in the church a portion of the shrine has been preserved.

There were other relics which brought wealth to the abbey, particularly the garments which Thomas à Becket was wearing when he was murdered in Canterbury Cathedral—the hair shirt which he always affected as a form of penance, and the blood-stained rochet.

The abbey covered ten acres, and was surrounded by an embattled wall, part of which remained until

recent years. The gatehouse was still standing late in the XVIIIth century, and the whole place is said to have resembled a fortified town, ruled over by a powerful abbot, who attended parliament wearing his mitre and carrying a silver crozier.

Of the great church as it stood at the Dissolution only the nave now exists, the transepts and chancel having been swept away when Henry VIII. terminated its existence. The existing transepts and chancel are modern. The eastern part of the nave is pure Norman, of the time of Roger de Montgomery, but the western bays are very much later, dating from the XIVth century, when the Perpendicular style was just coming in. The Norman columns are of the massive circular type, with a triforium above of the same date. The chancel was rebuilt in 1887, and the clerestory and roof of the nave were restored in 1894.

At the west end is a short tower in a central position, flanked by the ends of the north and south aisles of the nave. The lower part of the tower is Norman, while the upper portion is Early Perpendicular, the main feature being the large window filling up the greater part of the wall surface. Above this great window and between two smaller ones is the figure of a mailed knight, commonly attributed to Edward III., but stated by the heralds in their visitation in 1622 to represent Roger, Earl of Montgomery.

The old abbey bell was broken in 1730, when ringing a joyous peal over the safe return of Corbet Kynaston from France, and has now been recast. The font, hollowed from the capital of a Norman pillar, was brought from High Ercall.

There are a considerable number of interesting monuments in the church, though they were not originally associated with it, being placed there when other churches were destroyed. In fact it seems to have been something in the nature of a dumping-ground for monuments with which no one knew quite what to do. Tombs have been deposited here from St. Alkmund's, St. Chad's, Wellington Church and St. Giles's, and the old abbey church does not seem to have received them very graciously. Apart from the disputed founder's tomb, sometimes regarded as that of Walter de Dunstanville, who died in 1197, there is the effigy of a judge wearing a coif, of the time of Edward I., and of an ecclesiastic inscribed Thomas More, "*vicarius abbatiae*" (1402-1426). There is a very interesting table tomb removed from Wellington, after suffering from brutal neglect in the churchyard for which it was never intended. It represents William Charlton in armour (died 1528) and his wife Anne. Another table tomb from St. Alkmund's bears the effigies, still retaining the paint with which they were covered, of Alderman William Jones (died 1612) and his wife Eleanora. This tomb also was ruthlessly thrust into the churchyard before finding shelter in the abbey church. The finest monument of all is that of Speaker Richard Onslow and his wife Catherine Hardyng, with their children. An inscription states "that it was repaired in 1742 by the Rt. Hon. Arthur Onslow, Speaker of the House of Commons, literally descended from this Mr. Onslow, who was Speaker in the House of Commons in the 8th of Queen Elizabeth."

The conventual buildings of the abbey have almost

entirely disappeared, though there is one remarkable survival in the shape of the reader's pulpit from the refectory, which stands in melancholy fashion in a yard by the railway station. It is a beautiful little fragment, having a vaulted roof with a central boss representing the Crucifixion, and in the panels are sculptured figures.

BUILDWAS ABBEY

The solemn and beautiful ruins of the Romanesque church of Buildwas Abbey, and such of the domestic parts of the foundation which the hand of Time, aided by those of the iconoclast, has spared, are beautifully situated on the southern side of the Severn, a few miles to the east of Shrewsbury. Wooded hills, and not far off the bare and sudden Wrekin, overlook the pleasant sloping meadows, and although a railway now runs all too close to the abbey, the site still possesses quiet charm. One can still enjoy the sweet sounds which intensify the silence of Nature when gazing upon the roofless nave and transepts, and under nearly all conditions of hour and season, the massive simplicity of the Norman arcades is full of poetry and picturesqueness.

Buildwas was one of the oldest of the Cistercian monasteries, being founded in 1135 by Roger de Clinton, who is usually designated as Bishop of Chester. But that city was not then the seat of the bishopric, which it had only enjoyed during the lifetime of Bishop Peter, who had begun to build St. John's at Chester as his cathedral. His successor had removed



THE SOUTH TRANSEPT OF BUILDWAS ABBEY
Showing the eastern arches of the nave. The period is
Transitional Norman.

to Coventry, and later bishops resided at Lichfield. This Bishop Roger de Clinton indeed was particularly fond of Lichfield, having added much to the buildings there, and after his time the bishops of the diocese called themselves "of Lichfield and Coventry." He was a good, energetic bishop, and finally took the Cross and joined the Crusaders, dying at Antioch in 1148.

The abbey enjoyed the favour of the early Plantagenet kings and in course of time became wealthy, having the smaller abbey of Basingwerk in Flint and that of St. Mary, Dublin, affiliated to it. It also possessed a treasure in the shape of a cope worked by Fair Rosamund, whom Queen Eleanor is believed to have disposed of by poison. A story has been preserved, through the industry of that mediæval historian, Matthew of Paris, the monk of St. Albans, who gathered news after the style of a modern editor, concerning a certain Abbot of Buildwas and Henry III. The king, who was badly in need of money for his wars, called the abbot before him to know why he had not assisted him. "Am I not your patron, father and protector? How comes it that you refuse money to my humble suit in my poverty?"

The abbot replied: "It befits not your majesty to ruin us by extortion, when you might rather demand our fervent supplications and prayers, like the pious King of the Franks."

"I want both," replied the king, "money and prayers."

"Sire, that is impossible, I wis—for if you, sire, with a violent hand take our pittance from us, how is

it possible that we can offer up prayers for your majesty with sincere and devout hearts?—and prayers without devotion will be of little avail.”

There were twelve monks in the abbey at the Dissolution, and the annual income amounted to £110 19s. 3d. The property went to Edward Grey, Lord Powys, whose son sold it to Lord Ellesmere. Sir William Acton of London bought it in 1648, and his descendants in the female line still own it, using the abbot's house as a residence.

The abbey church is roofless, but it is otherwise fairly complete. Part of the massive tower still stands on the supporting piers of the crossing, and the whole nave arcade of sturdy Norman columns remains, though the aisles have vanished. The clerestory too is complete with its Transitional windows, notwithstanding the fact that it has been exposed to the weather for centuries. A solid stone screen separated the nave from the chancel, which is very short and whose eastern end has three lancet windows. There are remains of an Early English sedilium, and of the chapels which formerly occupied the eastern ends of the transepts. The church was dedicated to St. Mary and St. Chad, the latter being the great patron saint of Lichfield, who refused to ride in his diocese, always going afoot until the Archbishop of Canterbury insisted upon his giving up this strenuous habit, lifting him on a horse with his own hands. Bede writes of a company of angels who sang celestial harmonies to St. Chad as he lay dying.

Of the monastic buildings the chapter-house is the most complete, having a groined roof supported by

four columns, two of which are circular, and two octagonal. There are also some remains of the dormitory which was situated above. It is suggested that three windows at the east end and one on each side symbolised the Five Wounds of the Crucifixion. The chapter-house contains some XIIIth-century coffins bearing crosses.

The abbot's house, which became a private dwelling at the Dissolution, contains some interesting features. The very fine carved oak ceiling in the dining-room is enriched with three ostrich feathers, the Tudor portcullis and a heart bearing the word "Jesu." On the first floor is a drawing-room, once the abbot's reception gallery. His private chapel has now fallen to domestic usage.

In their early days the Cistercian monasteries were generally filled with men who were desirous of practising a rigid asceticism, for whom the arts of music and painting, or rich architecture, had either no charm or were regarded as a temptation to worldliness. Dr. Jessopp calls them the Puritans of the monasteries, for they "appealed to that mysterious sentiment which makes some minds shrink with fear from the touch of luxury and regard culture as antagonistic to personal holiness." They wore a dress of undyed wool, never indulged in furs, and bore the cold of winter without a fire. Meat was only allowed to the sick, their ordinary diet being very spare, while they toiled to produce all the food they allowed themselves. In the zest of their early enthusiasm they refused all rents from lands, needing nothing beyond what they could make or grow for themselves. As time went on this ascetic

view of life gradually faded, and we find manors and churches belonging to the abbey, until at the Dissolution it held twelve granges and three parsonages.

And the day came when the commissioners of Henry VIII. took possession of the abbey, and made homeless the white-robed occupants who disappeared into the outer world, and never again has the old church of St. Mary and St. Chad echoed to the chanting of the mass.

Dead and gone is the old world's ideal,
The old arts and old religions fled.

LILLESBALL ABBEY

Lilleshall Abbey was founded by two brothers, one a cleric and the other a layman, Philip de Belmeis, lord of Tonge, who built a house for Augustinian canons who came from Dorchester Abbey in Oxfordshire. Richard de Belmeis, the brother of Philip, had been made Archdeacon of London when a mere boy, through the interest of his uncle, the Bishop of London, and when he became Dean of St. Alkmund's at Shrewsbury, he bestowed nearly all its lands upon their new foundation at Lilleshall. The Lady Æthelflaed little thought when she founded the College of St. Alkmund, that it would be robbed by a later generation for the benefit of a rival house. As each prebend became vacant, it was given to the Augustinian canons, until only one poor vicar was left to the one-time wealthy collegiate church.

From its foundation in 1145 up to the Dissolution



THE EAST END OF THE CHOIR OF VALLE CRUCIS ABBEY

The design is very remarkable on account of the subdivision of the two buttresses between the three lower lancet windows in order to allow space for two lancets above

the abbey flourished, becoming quite rich, though the abbots protested that they had so many pilgrims, due to their nearness to Watling Street, that their income did not suffice to cover their hospitality.

At the Dissolution it was bought by James Leveson, whose descendant, Frances, married one of the Gowers, with whom the property still remains, together with the chartulary of the abbey.

The ruins stand in the grounds of Lilleshall Hall, built for the Duke of Sutherland by Wyatt, and form a picturesque cluster. The beautiful Norman doorway in the west front opens upon a vacant nave, all the pillars and arches having fallen as far as the east window, which was large and retains tracery of the xivth century. The side windows of the choir are narrow Romanesque slits. The choir stalls were carried off to enrich St. Peter's Church at Wolverhampton.

There are considerable remains of the conventual buildings, particularly of the refectory, which has been used as a farmhouse, and the cloister garth as a farmyard. By arrangement with Sir John Leigh, the owner, the ruins have been scheduled as a historical monument, and their preservation will therefore be secured.

THE ABBEY OF VALLE CRUCIS

The name of Valle Crucis, the valley of the cross, is probably derived from a great sepulchral cross, the pillar of Eliseg, twenty-four feet in height and of the viiith century, which stood in the centre of the glen. It can still be seen from the abbey door, though

it has no longer such an imposing height. Everyone agrees that there is no more perfect or more interesting ruin in North Wales than this picturesque abbey, built by the Cistercians in a most beautiful situation. All the XVIIIth-century writers combine in singing its praises. Pennant, who saw it in 1773, writes of it as "solemnly seated at the foot of the mountains, on a small meadowy flat, watered by a pretty stream, and shaded with hanging woods"; while Richard Fenton, who made tours in Wales in the early XIXth century, writes:

This abbey is undoubtedly as fine a specimen of masonry as any Monastic building in Wales can produce.

He goes on to describe the condition of the ruins as he then found them:

The window at the West End is very fine, of the Early Gothic like Salisbury, but the tracery is fast going to decay. . . . In the South Transept there is a canopy of rich stone work, under which perhaps the founder may have been buried. It is now filled up with rubbish almost to the very top. . . . In the chancel grows a very large Ash tree, whose Branches fill the space, and if felled (and it is marked), must, I think, fall and demolish that part of the building.

This Mr. Fenton was a pleasant writer, a scholar and an antiquary, but also a man of the world, knowing Dr. Johnson, Edmund Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Goldsmith and David Garrick. He possessed ample means, and in consequence was able to pursue the many-sided interests of his life with the ease which wealth permits.

The charter of the abbey is dated 1202, and the

founder is said to be Madoc of Gryffydd, Prince of Powys. At the Dissolution in 1535 it was found to be rich in livings and farmlands. It was given by James I. to Edward Wotton, who later became Lord Wotton. It was afterwards possessed by John Trevor of Trevor, whose descendants still own it.

The abbey church was allowed to become a neglected ruin, while the conventual buildings were used for farm purposes. In 1851 the church was cleared of some of the accumulated materials of which Richard Fenton wrote, and from 1865, when the Rev. H. T. Owen, who was in charge of the neighbouring Trevor Chapel, was made custodian, the church has been well cared for. Until his death in 1910 Mr. Owen was enthusiastic over his work, and due recognition of its value has been made by the editor of the Denbighshire volume of the publications of the Historical Monuments Commission, who stated that "the present good condition is largely due to his exertions."

The building period of the abbey was almost entirely in the XIIIth century, and thus the ruin mainly exhibits the Early English style. There are no round-headed arches in the church, and the only one in the domestic buildings is to be found in a passage between the transept and the chapter-house. As is usually the case, the oldest part of the church is the east end, which has three lofty lancet windows and two smaller ones above. These two upper windows are most curiously cut into the plain pilaster buttresses which run up the face of the exterior between the lower windows—a device at once unique and bizarre.

The plan of the church was of the ordinary

Cistercian model—a nave with aisles, transepts with chapels, and a choir.

It is uncertain whether any central tower was ever built, but if a poet's words may be relied upon as a record of such a fact, the church at one time possessed a tower. Thomas Churchyard, the Elizabethan versifier, who wrote a topographical poem on Wales in 1587, sang thus of Valle Crucis:

An abbey near that mountain town there is
Whose walls yet stand, and steeples too likewise.

It seems unlikely that he would have gone out of his way to write of a steeple without any basis in fact, and yet Master Thomas may have mixed his notes, or he may equally have relied too much upon his memory!

Enough remains of the west front to indicate the beauty of the building when it stood complete and perfect in its details. The doorway which opened into the nave was deeply recessed, above it were three windows containing tracery, and still higher a rose window filled the gable. Above the rose window the following inscription can be seen:

Adam abbas fecit hoc opus i pace quiescat ame.

(Adam the abbot made this work; may his soul rest in peace.)

There seems to have been no Adam who was abbot before the middle of the XIVth century, and therefore it is concluded that the upper part of this west end, a most satisfactory piece of work, was one of the latest parts of the whole building.

The chapter-house had a vaulted roof, supported by four pillars, and had a large Flamboyant window

opening on to the cloister. A small door led to the dormitory above.

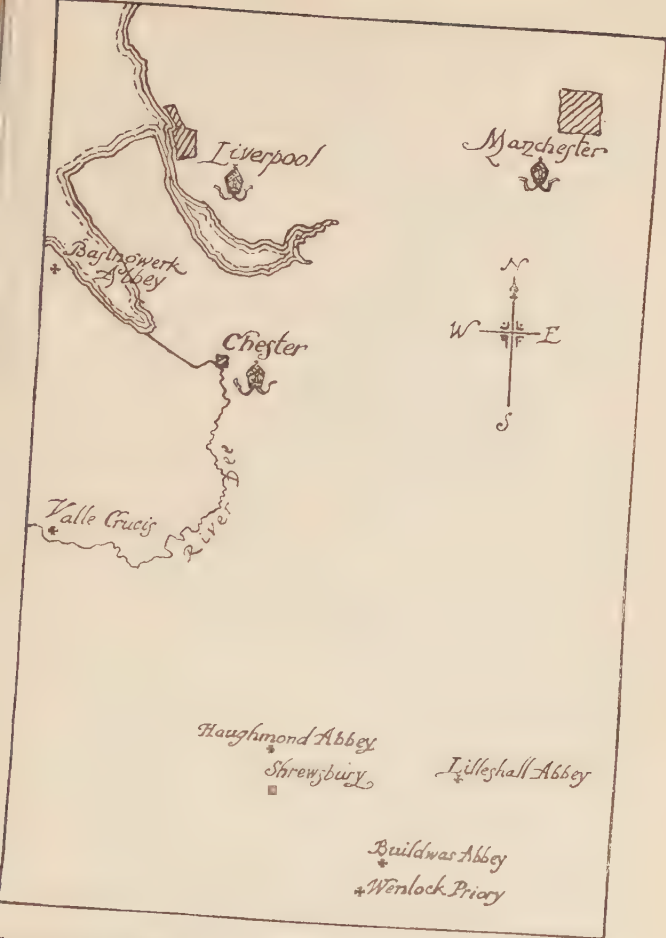
The Powys family at one time used the abbey as a burial-place, and in this beautiful spot many of their sculptured monumental stones have been discovered, broken, or used to stop up holes in the walls. In an attic in Llangollen two interesting alabaster panels were found which are considered to have originally belonged to the Abbey of Valle Crucis.

BASINGWERK ABBEY

Basingwerk Abbey in the county of Flint was attached to the larger Cistercian Abbey of Buildwas in Shropshire. It was founded, according to Dugdale, by Ranulph, Earl of Chester, in 1131. From its position it had a difficult part to play, for it was sometimes in the power of the Welsh, and as often in the possession of the English. But apparently the abbots managed to be impartial or tactful and were thus generally protected either by Llewelyn, Prince of Wales, or Henry II.; and when the struggle in Wales began to show which side would prove victorious, the house evinced a very definite leaning to the victorious party, the abbot as a consequence receiving a command to attend the parliament of Edward I.

The ruins are quite close to Holywell station, but they have been so sadly neglected that very little remains, and very careful study is required before the visitor can make out what was the actual plan. Nearly all the church has fallen, except part of the west wall of the south transept, and some other

fragments of the south aisle. It is possible to find parts of the cloisters, and the refectory has some remains of arcading, but when the Historical Monuments Commission visited it in 1910 the ruins were described as "a tangle of roofless and for the most part disconnected walls and grass-grown heaps of ruins." Every part was choked with nettles, that particularly pungent and destructive form of vegetation as far as archæology is concerned! Lead was deliberately stripped from the roof at the Dissolution, and many of the treasures seem to have gone to neighbouring parish churches. Llanassa claims to have received coloured glass from Basingwerk; Cilcain says its roof was once in the abbey, while the church of St. Mary's-on-the-Hill, at Chester, brings the documentary evidence of the churchwardens' book to show that the choir stalls were brought from Basingwerk. Under the date of 1536 there runs: "in there tyme the quere was boght at Basewerk, and sette uppe, with all costs and charges belonging to the same."



SKETCH MAP SHOWING THE POSITIONS OF THE CATHEDRALS AND ABBEYS DESCRIBED

A CHRONOLOGY

OF THE

ABBNEY AND CATHEDRAL OF CHESTER

DATE	ABBOTS AND BUILDING DATES	KINGS AND CURRENT EVENTS
c. A.D. 55		Deva (Chester) becomes Roman military base and the headquarters of Legio XX., "Valeria Victrix"

ENGLISH ROMANESQUE OR "SAXON"

871		ALFRED THE GREAT
c. 910	Early church at Chester re-dedicated to St. Werburgh and St. Oswald, perhaps by Æthelflaed, daughter of Alfred the Great	Perhaps in reign of Æthelstan
1017		CNUT THE DANE HAROLD I. HARTHACNUT
1042		EDWARD III., "The Confessor"

ROMANESQUE FIRST "NORMAN" SCHOOL

1057	Abbey-church enlarged and repaired by Leofric, Earl of Mercia	
1066		WILLIAM I., "The Conqueror"
1087		WILLIAM II., "Rufus"
1093	Endowment greatly augmented by Hugh (Lupus), Earl of Chester Secular canons replaced by Benedictine monks Leofric's church rebuilt about this time	

ROMANESQUE SECOND NORMAN SCHOOL (ENRICHED)

1100		HENRY I.
1117	Death of <i>Richard</i> , 1st Abbot of Chester	

DATE	ABBOTS AND BUILDING DATES	KINGS AND CURRENT EVENTS
1121	<i>William</i> , 2nd Abbot North-west tower completed during abbacy of <i>William</i>	
1135		STEPHEN
1140	Death of <i>William</i>	
1141	<i>Ralph</i> , 3rd Abbot Period of neglect	HENRY II.
c. 1157	<i>Robert Fitz-Nigel</i> , 4th Abbot	HENRY II.
c. 1174	<i>Robert</i> , 5th Abbot	Murder of Thomas à Becket
1184	Death of <i>Robert</i>	

TRANSITIONAL NORMAN (ROMANESQUE-GOTHIC)

1186	<i>Robert de Hastings</i> , 6th Abbot, deposed in 1194
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EARLY ENGLISH GOTHIC

1189		RICHARD I.
1194	<i>Geoffrey</i> , 7th Abbot	
1199		JOHN
1208	<i>Hugh Grylle</i> , 8th Abbot	
1211	Completion of rebuilding of Tower and Choir	
1215		Magna Carta
1216		HENRY III. crowned at Gloucester
1217		Hubert de Burgh, Regent
1226	<i>William Marmiun</i> , 9th Abbot	
1228	<i>Walter Pincebech</i> , 10th Abbot	
1240	<i>Roger Frend</i> , 11th Abbot Establishment of monks in- creased	
1249	<i>Thomas Capenhurst</i> , 12th Abbot	
1265	<i>Simon de Whitchurch</i> , or <i>Albo</i> <i>Monasterio</i> , 13th Abbot	Death of Simon de Montfort at Evesham
1272		EDWARD I.
1280	Chapter - House and Lady Chapel completed	

DECORATED GOTHIC

DATE	ABBOTS AND BUILDING DATES	KINGS AND CURRENT EVENTS
1283		Edward I. attends Mass in the Abbey-church
1289	Death of <i>Simon de Whitchurch</i> : during his abbacy much of the rebuilding of the Abbey was completed	
1289-91	Edward I. kept Abbey in his hands	
1291	<i>Thomas de Burcheles</i> or <i>Byrche-Hylles</i> , 14th Abbot	
1307		EDWARD II.
1323	Death of <i>Thomas de Byrche-Hylles</i>	Independence of Scotland
1324	<i>William de Bebyngton</i> , 15th Abbot	
1327		EDWARD III.
1349	<i>Richard Seynesbury</i> , 16th Abbot	THE BLACK DEATH

PERPENDICULAR GOTHIC (circa 1350)

1363	<i>Thomas de Newport</i> , 17th Abbot	
1377		RICHARD II.
1385	<i>William de Merston</i> , 18th Abbot	
1386	<i>Henry de Sutton</i> , 19th Abbot	
1399		HENRY IV.
1413	<i>Thomas Yerdesley</i> , 20th Abbot	HENRY V.
1422		HENRY VI.
1435	<i>John Salghall</i> , 21st Abbot	Wars of the Roses
1453	<i>Richard Oldon</i> or <i>Oldham</i> , 22nd Abbot	
1461		EDWARD IV.
1483		EDWARD V.
		RICHARD III.
1485	<i>Simon de Ripley</i> , 23rd Abbot	HENRY VII.
	Rebuilt Nave, Tower and South Transept and began other plans for alterations not completed at the Dissolution	

TUDOR GOTHIC

DATE	ABBOTS AND BUILDING DATES	KINGS AND CURRENT EVENTS
1492	Death of Simon Ripley	
1493	<i>John Birkenshaw</i> , 24th Abbot	
1509		HENRY VIII.
1529	Birkenshaw deprived and soon afterwards reinstated <i>Thomas Hyphill</i> , 25th Abbot (temporary) <i>Thomas Marshall</i> , 26th Abbot (temporary)	
c. 1537	Death of Birkenshaw	
1537	<i>John Clarke</i> , 27TH AND LAST ABBOT OF CHESTER He surrendered the monastery at the Dissolution and was appointed Dean of the new Cathedral	
1536		Dissolution of Lesser Abbeys
1539		Dissolution of Greater Abbeys

CREATION OF SEE OF CHESTER

1541	<i>John Bird</i> , 1st Bishop of Chester	
1547		EDWARD VI.
1553		MARY I.
1554	<i>George Cotes</i>	
1556	<i>Cuthbert Scott</i> , was deprived by Elizabeth in 1561	
1558		ELIZABETH
1561	<i>William Downham</i>	
1563		Thirty-Nine Articles
1579	<i>William Chadderton</i>	
1588		THE SPANISH ARMADA
1595	<i>Hugh Bellot</i>	
1596	<i>Richard Vaughan</i>	

END OF GOTHIC STYLE

		JAMES I.
1616	<i>Thomas Moreton</i>	Death of Shakespeare

DATE	BISHOPS AND BUILDING DATES	KINGS AND CURRENT EVENTS
1619	<i>John Bridgeman</i>	
1625		CHARLES I.
1642		THE GREAT CIVIL WAR
1653		OLIVER CROMWELL
1660	<i>Brian Walton</i>	CHARLES II.
1662	<i>Henry Ferne</i> (died before reaching his See)	Puritan clergy deprived
1662	<i>George Hall</i>	
1668	<i>John Wilkins</i>	
1673	<i>John Pearson</i>	
1685		JAMES II.
1686	<i>Thomas Cartwright</i>	
1689	<i>Nicholas Stratford</i>	WILLIAM III. AND MARY II.
1702		ANNE
1707	<i>Sir William Dawes</i>	Union of Great Britain
1714	<i>Francis Gastrell</i>	GEORGE I.
1726	<i>Samuel Peploe</i>	
1727		GEORGE II.
1751-7	<i>Edmund Keene</i>	Clive in India
1760		GEORGE III.
1771	<i>William Markham</i>	
1776	<i>Beilby Porteus</i>	
1788	<i>William Cleaver</i>	
1800	<i>Henry Wm. Majendie</i>	
1807		Napoleon supreme in Europe
1810	<i>Bower Edward Sparke</i>	
1812	<i>George Henry Law</i>	
1815		WATERLOO
1820		GEORGE IV.
1824	<i>Charles James Blomfield</i>	
1828	<i>John Bird Sumner</i>	
1830		WILLIAM IV.
1837		VICTORIA
1848	<i>John Graham</i>	
1854-5		Crimean War
1865	<i>William Jacobson</i>	
1870		Germany defeats France
1884	<i>William Stubbs</i>	
1889	<i>Francis John Jayne</i>	
1900		EDWARD VII.
1910		GEORGE V.

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